THE TRAGEDY OF THE STUARTS

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THE TRAGEDY OF THE STUARTS

BY
J. DESMOND GLEESON

"*History is not only the fittest study, but the only study, and includes all others.*"—CARLYLE.

"*History is bunk*" (a more modern view).—HENRY FORD.

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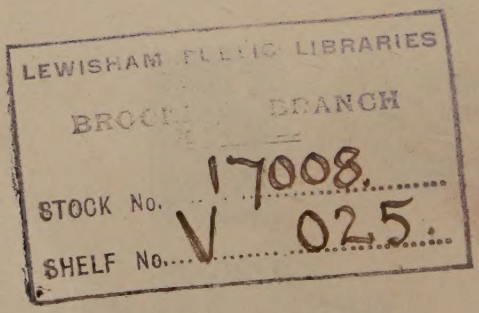

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To My Mother

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INTRODUCTION

At a special date in the History of England the Scottish Stewarts, or Stuarts, were claimants to the English Crown. A series of accidents had robbed the Tudor line of heirs, and Henry VIII's children followed one another, first to the throne and then to the grave, leaving no children. Edward, Mary, Elizabeth, they came and went their way, and when the last was gone, none other remained to succeed. To find a claimant it was necessary to reach out to the descendants of Margaret Tudor, the sister of Henry VIII, who had married the Scottish King, James IV, in 1503. In this way were the Scottish kings brought into England.

It was the triumph of the House of Stuart that it was raised from the smaller kingdom to reign over the larger. In a more serious sense, however, it was the Scottish kings' tragedy. The misfortune of the Stuarts was that they succeeded to the kingship in England precisely at that time when the traditional monarchy was in process of being dissolved and replaced by the Aristocracy. They were called to a throne that was not stable. They remained in England while the popular monarchy fell. The death of the kingship was the doom of the Stuarts, and when the central power was abolished in England, it was the Stuarts who passed out into exile.

The Monarchy, national and popular in England, was pulled down and destroyed. The process of destruction lasted for a period of more than a century. It began with the raising of the new rich in

Henry VIII's time, and it ended when the last Stuart King vanished over the water. At the commencement of the period the Monarch was supreme; at the conclusion of the period, the Aristocracy was supreme. And during the years that the upsetting and substituting was going on, the Stuarts were on the throne. It was their business to defend the rights of the monarchy, their duty to preserve the prerogative, their fate to fight the losing battle. It was also their tragedy.

The Stuart Kings of England each had his private tragedy, but this great war with the new rich lords was the tragedy of the whole line. As a race they were doomed when they crossed the border, and that striking event that made their coming possible, the execution of Mary Queen of Scots, was a sort of symbol of the whole larger fate that brooded over their house. It was a kind of shadow that threw itself over the Scottish Kings of England and, like fate in a Greek tragedy, dogged the footsteps of the chief actors.

Nevertheless, the shadow of fate is quite a false figure and gives an utterly unreal picture of the truth. To us the Stuarts may seem to have been doomed to disaster from the start, but no Stuart ever thought or acted as if he was doomed from the start, or even at the end. They viewed their opponents as a monstrous innovation, a high treason that it was their duty to put down, and which would inevitably be punished in due course, even if it prevailed for the time. The Stuarts took their places as the monarchs of England at the time when the Crown had lost the control of the national purse. Their opponents had that control: they were indeed the representatives of the new big fortunes. They were able to withhold supplies from the King, as also to finance action against him. It was this double purpose, carried on without slackening of effort, generation after generation for more than a century, that finally crushed the monarchy out of England. It was a pitiless policy, followed consis-

tently that killed kingship and put the *other* side into power, and though to us it may seem that in his long battle with his big subjects the impoverished king was fated to fall, no such shadow of fate darkened his own day, nor caused him to diminish his effort.

The national monarchy in England was a rooted, familiar thing. It was natural to Englishmen to expect a monarch to be at the head of affairs. It was something that they understood, that suited their temperament, that satisfied their instincts. The English people, but especially the poorer people, were steeped in the tradition of popular monarchy and at one with their Stuart king in looking on the rising of the rich as a rebellious action. Six hundred years had the tradition survived in this country and the English people are notorious for their conservative tendencies. It was with amazement that they beheld the Kingship perish. Something was happening that they looked upon as impossible, and they halted in bewilderment, scarcely believing their own eyes. They saw the King's head fall at the block at Whitehall, but they also saw the cavalry of the New Order charge the people (i.e. themselves) just after the King's head rolled to the ground. It was the end of the old tradition and the beginning of the new, and, for all who could grasp it, very significant.

The great struggle was one between the existing monarchy and the oligarchy that was to supplant it. The main issue was, whether one man should rule in person, or whether a small number should sit round a table and rule. The question was, should direction and control radiate from a personal circle or from one slightly larger, from a King or from a group of Aristocrats ? But the sheer simplicity of the contest was blurred and its outline lost on account of religious disturbance in the realm. If at this period religion had done nothing else, it would have served very well to provide a screen behind which strange movements could take place. In the sixteenth century it so happened that a sort of religious mania, running to

extremes in many parts of the country, in some sense obscured the real battle between the King and the Aristocracy from the eyes of ordinary men.

The rise of the Puritans in England was probably as unexpected as it was overwhelming. Though not known as a Reformation, it was, in fact, a second Reformation in English religious observance; and both in less than a century! The movement of the Puritans was a movement to reform the reformed church, a movement towards greater simplicity, or ugliness, in matters of worship, but, above all, it was a movement that derived force and drive, not to say fury, from the Jacobite translation of the Scriptures. The translation of the Bible was one of the real works of James I. Instead of giving his religious people what they wanted, he set them to translate the Bible. This they did, using an archaic language that was already passing from general use even in Shakespeare's day, and the achievement of the translators still challenges our admiration and respect. The new sect for simplicity, the Puritans, seized upon the Bible as it became available, and it is no exaggeration to say that it went to their heads. The new translation fed the flame of religious enthusiasm and the mania of the Puritans (it can be called nothing less) raged over the country. These Puritans contracted the habit of talking through the nose, as if that in some special way promoted godliness, and it was now the great sayings of Scripture that they repeated with nasal accent. It must not be thought, however, that the purpose is to run down the Puritans, nor to underrate their importance in the history of England. It is true, nevertheless, that the fires that sprung from their first enthusiasm were often mixed with madness.

But the point about the Puritans here is that they set out to reform the Established Church and to smash the painted glass and statuary that had been allowed to remain since papist days. But the Established Church was one of the supports upon which the King must rely. The good Protestant Kings, James I and

Charles I, the Stuarts in England, in fact, before they had been sent into exile where they picked up less insular views, were the firm supporters of this Protestant religion that the Puritans were so bent on reforming. The King and the Established Faith went together, the King indeed, since the time of Henry VIII, considered as the supreme head of the Church. It was against this natural combination that the Puritans hurled themselves with fury and biblical phrases. Yet they would have made no lasting impression on their time, have perhaps scarcely been heard of in history, save as an eccentric religious group that suddenly appeared, blazed with a queer intensity and then went out, leaving a trail of bewilderment behind, but for a significant event. At a certain stage in their struggle with the Monarchy, the big magnates made common cause with the Puritans.

The two joined together, uniting their forces against the common enemy, the King. They had this in agreement that the Crown was the foe of each. The lords were thus strengthened by an army only too ready to fight the battle of the Lord. Their great aim was purity in religious worship. They were running wild about the country for it. It was this great force and energy that the magnates were prudent enough to win over to themselves. They harnessed this religious impulse, intolerance, or mania, and led it forward to the ruin of Kingship. Thus it was that the big landlords were able to prosper in their design to replace the monarchy and thus, also, was the Puritan fashion stamped so heavily upon English history.

Nevertheless it was a curious alliance, that between the large landowners and the Puritans. The prime purpose of the Puritans was to clear the religion of the country of all decorative detail and harmonic richness, to take splendour out of the ritual, just as they took it out of the House of God. It was, in other words, religious intolerance. But the magnates were concerned to wrest the traditional rights from the King, and they did so in the name of English liberty.

This taking from the King and keeping to themselves the power that had descended to him from a long line of ancestors, they described as preserving the liberties of the people of England. But why one side concerned (ostensibly) to preserve the English people's liberties should unite with a second side, blatantly and even defiantly concerned to curtail the liberties of the Established religion of the people, is not immediately apparent. The fact that the enemy of each was the King, was the reason that drew them both together and helped them to show one united front. And the ultimate leader that they threw up between them was, in some sense, really a representative of the two. Oliver Cromwell, or Williams, as he first called himself, was a cadet of the new wealthy houses that had risen since the Reformation. The family was descended from that adventurer, Thomas Cromwell, who rose so rapidly, but fell so surely, in Henry VIII's time. The pickings of no less than seven great abbey foundations went to this family. They were of the new rich gentry class, of the stuff from which aristocrats were made. On the other hand, Cromwell was of the Puritan way of thinking. His biblical quotations, his tears and his nasal prayers: they were all of the new order, all in keeping with the religious spirit that ran like a fire through the country at the time.

There was one further matter that sent the lords or landowners and the new Puritan party together, though they had so little else in common. There was one common enemy besides the Monarchy. There were the Catholics. Each party in that alliance shared the same horror and detestation of the papists. The Stuarts, in fact, found the Catholics a problem all through the century they were in England, and they found them a problem principally because neither the great lords nor the party for religious reform would tolerate them, or even tolerate toleration towards them.

The big lords hated the Catholics because (1) their

fortunes were founded on the loot of the Catholic Church during the Reformation, (2) because they always feared a resurrection of that body in England. They feared a resurrection of Catholic influence in this country. It might be merely a question of fashion, yet they feared it, since their own houses were founded in direct opposition to it. They knew that whatever else it was, Catholicism was their enemy, and, like good opponents, they were always ready to fight. But there was always one unknown factor in the dispute: they did not know what was the real strength of the Catholics in England. No one knew. Many a Catholic did not even wish to be known. But from this very lack of knowledge, their opponents were apt to put the number of Catholics as higher than it really was, and it was this hatred of the thing itself and fear of the hidden numbers that made them persecute Catholics with such steady violence, generation succeeding generation. From their point of view it was a sound policy, yet it had in it not a little of panic.

Catholicity ebbs and flows under the Stuarts in an astonishing manner. Now the Stuarts are persecuting with uncommon severity, again they are resting mainly on the support of Catholics, and one Stuart King, Charles II, owed his life only to the fidelity of his Catholic subjects. The explanation is simple. The Stuarts were not of a persecuting disposition. Left to themselves, they did not persecute, but ever and again their opponents forced them into a corner when they had to give way, and persecution became general for a space. Mary Queen of Scots was a staunch Catholic, who would not sacrifice her faith for her throne. Her son, James, was a trained Protestant. Under him the Catholic persecution of Elizabeth's time was not only revived, but increased. The excuse was the Gunpowder Plot. That event gave the Cecils and their henchmen a reason for attacking the religious spirit that was to them, of all such spirits, the most obnoxious. James I's son,

Charles, married a Catholic wife, but in the eyes of the anti-Catholic faction in England, rapidly being increased by the ever-rising flood of the Puritans, this was in itself a very grave mishap. Charles was forced to persecute, as his father had been. Then came the day when the King and the big lords tested the issue between them at the point of the sword. Charles raised his standard at Nottingham and called on the loyal to assemble, and at least one-half of the host that gathered in response to his summons was composed of the persecuted Catholics. The reason is not far to seek. Catholics knew that though the King was forced to persecute, he was incapable of initiating persecution; that though it was done in his name, it was done against his conscience. But even if they had little to expect from him, they had absolutely nothing but persecution to expect from the other side. Anyway, they rallied round him, fighting their own battle as well as his, and the remaining Stuart Kings were not ungrateful. Charles II and his brother James would have been trained in the Protestant cause but for the fact of the exile that was forced on them by their father's capture and death. They were sent into foreign lands and there came across the Catholic nations. They could never, therefore, be so insular or closed as either their father or their grandfather had been. They knew too well that Catholics were men and women, to think of them as the wild beings that the persecutions suggested. But while they found no barrier of prejudice between themselves and the Catholics of England, they were, nevertheless, powerless to stem, or even turn, the current of feeling against them. Both the royal brothers, who passed their years of youth and early manhood in foreign and largely Catholic countries, felt drawn towards the Catholic philosophy. There was something in it that made direct contact with themselves. Yet, though one may say that they returned to this country half Catholics, they were unable to assist those of their people who were full Catholics. Charles II was well

known for his leaning towards religious tolerance. He formulated his " Declaration of Indulgence," yet this measure for freedom of conscience in England was swept away by the flood-tide of the Popish Plot. Charles, who was the King and recognised as a fair-minded man, was quite unable to stir the national feeling in favour of Catholics, but a rogue like Titus Oates might raise it to the heights of mad rioting against the Catholics.

The " Declaration of Indulgence " might well have been forgotten by all. But his brother James had not forgotten it, and when he, in turn, was seated on the throne, he brought it forward once more in the fight for religious liberty. He championed the Catholic cause fearlessly, making it and the cause of monarchy one thing. The monarchy was failing, nay, had failed, when he added this unpopular religion to it. It is probable that without adding the weight of Catholicism to the weight of the Crown, James II would have fallen. It was a clear fight between the King and the Aristocrats, with the Aristocrats holding most of the weapons, and the King not knowing how to make concessions, how to compromise with his opposition. It is probable that James would have fallen in any case, but when he joined the Catholic religion to the practice of monarchy, there was no doubt whatsoever about his cause being ruined.

The early Stuarts were Catholics. Mary Stuart kept aflame the Catholic spirit in Scotland while she was able. Her son and her grandson were of the Protestant faith, though it did not save them. Charles I suffered, not because he was a Protestant, but because he was a King. Charles II, again, who had more sense of humour than the rest of his line, played a middle course, until he had nothing to lose by declaring the truth about his own religious convictions. James II made sure of losing everything by declaring it with the greatest vigour whenever possible. The Stuarts were, therefore, at one time persecuting Catholics, at another being saved by them,

and right at the end of their period they were actually trying to save the Catholics. From Mary Queen of Scots to James II, her great-grandson, the Stuarts had thus completed the circle in just over a century, and their attitude to Catholics at the end was the same as it had been at the beginning. Between these two sovereigns it had varied very greatly indeed.

The question of how much the conditions of their times affected the characters of the Stuarts is not one that can be discussed in any detail here, yet certain observations may be made. Mary Queen of Scots, half French by birth and wholly French by education, does not seem to have had her character much disturbed by the rending events of her childhood. Her early widowhood doubtless left its mark upon her brow, but scarcely on her sovereignty. In fact, Mary Stuart's character was formed before the revolution in Scotland had altered the whole condition of the nation. But her son, who was born during the period of uprising and unrest, bore all the marks of that disturbed time in his soul. The trials of his mother, two months before her time, in connection with the Rizzio murder, stamped fear deeply into the unborn child. He was a poor specimen, of a diseased father, full of pompous convictions, but always lacking the courage of those convictions. The point is, however, that the stress and turmoil of the days of Mary Stuart went far to kill the Monarchy in Scotland, and effectually killed it in the mind of her son, James.

James's son, again, Charles I of England, was a stronger character. His mother, the sturdy Danish woman, doubtless supplied a robustness that his father was not able to give him, but the regal mien was from his grandmother. Sickly in his youth, it might well have been thought that he would struggle for peace through his life, as his father had done. But there was steel in Charles, steel from which sparks might on occasion fly. His wealthy subjects, the big lords, supplied the occasion, and England saw the sparks. Charles took nothing from his father, nor

from Darnley, but it was the spirit of Mary Queen of Scots that woke within him and caused him to challenge that growing power, whose aim was to abolish the kingship and to supplant it. Charles accepted battle when his father would have called for a compromise. His rigid mind saw things in two colours, black and white. There were no fine shades in his vision. He saw that either he or his lords must sit in judgment on England, and he knew that the place was his by right.

If the dark features and cynical humour of Charles I's son, Charles II, showed rather too distinctly the foreign blood that was in the Stuart veins, his brother, the Duke of York, was about as English an individual as one could possibly find. The Stuart blood was in the end extraordinarily mixed, and these two Princes had a French mother and a Danish grandmother. It would not be fair to say that Charles II's features suited Charles II's character, and yet it is obvious that he was a very cosmopolitan person. There is a sense in which his early exile destroyed his roots and he thus remained an exile for the whole of his life. He wandered about Europe, visiting the various capitals, and it sometimes seems that it was in the same drifting fashion that he visited London and was crowned King. His gift of humour was far more pronounced than was the humour of any other of his race. Indeed, the Stuarts were conspicuous for their lack of humour. But Charles did have a large share, even if it had been seasoned or over-seasoned by Latin realism. It was the humour of the Restoration that he represented when he talked like a man in a play—but the play was a comedy of Congreve's rather than of Will Shakespeare. For if the Restoration did not restore, it certainly turned, and the turn was towards a very new direction.

It was emphatically a direction that his brother James did not comprehend. James, when he was King, went forward because he knew that it was the duty of kings so to advance, but if his face showed no bewilderment with the new world, it was because

he had learned in exile how to fix his features like a mask. And while he was bewildered at the changes in the world, the world, in turn, was bewildered because he had not changed. At a time when disloyalty and treason were the fashion, he was not only a shining example of loyalty, but it is doubtful if he realized the value of dishonesty. At a time of double-dealing, he dealt straight and with unmarked cards. The sharpers were thankful to him for the assistance he gave them, yet a little bit dubious, thinking that there must be some trick in so much honesty. At a time of lies, James spoke the truth and was surprised when he was not believed. In short, if he failed to make perfect contact with his ministers and advisers, it was in some degree because he was out of touch with the spirit of his age. There was a new paganism in that world that rejected equally the Puritanism that had for a period been thrust upon the country, and the old Catholic tradition that had been the background against which most of the English story was written. It was a pagan spirit that was soon to begin to express itself in miniature classical temples and a philosophical republicism not really hostile to Aristocracy. But in this England that followed the Restoration the spirit had not yet mellowed to the tradition of Latin authors, oak beams and port wine. It was still raw, too young for the Age of Reason. And James, whose reason led him along paths far different, to planes of another altitude, was perplexed and worried. He lost his grip. Charles II had sufficient paganism in his composition to comprehend his age. He knew where to walk, where to avoid walking. No such knowledge was given to James. And perhaps the second exile into which he was hurried had in it more reason than the nobles, who brought it about, understood. Perhaps even the simple James, a child among his cunning counsellors, was wise enough to bring his affairs to a head in time, deciding that he would rule as a king, for the good of his subjects, or end his days in peace, for the good of his own soul.

One further matter must be mentioned, though it is of little importance to-day. It has been stated in plain terms that the essence of the struggle during the Stuart years was the central conflict between the old, time-honoured Monarchy and the new and very forceful Aristocracy. The latter survived and took over the functions of the former. The change from personal government to government by an oligarchy was about as clear and definite a change as may be traced in history, and yet this very obvious alteration has been obscured and darkened by attempts to represent the struggle as one with a democratic issue, and the triumph of the Aristocrats as—in some way—the triumph of the People. Such was the view put forward during the last century and it is the view still to be found in the older text-books in use to-day, and the only thing really worth saying about it is that it is utterly false.

The aristocratic triumph of 1688 was no democratic victory, it was merely what it was intended to be: the triumph of those who held the large fortunes, over the King who had lost his own fortune. The People did not take control when the King went down; indeed they were largely on his side. But the point is that no one expected them to, least of all did they themselves. They saw the King pass and something else (that they deemed less worthy) rear itself in his stead. Nor did they try to kill the King. Even Parliament did not try to do that. Parliament was the organ of the rich, but even Parliament did not kill the King. Before Charles I could be brought to trial, it was necessary for the new despotism to clear the Parliamentarians out of their Parliament, using for their purpose the military, upon which alone they relied. And to show his feeling for the institution and his opinion of the members, Cromwell remarked: "that not a dog was heard to bark at their going."

No, the people had very little to do with the change. For the most part they stood aside, bewildered by events. But those who have been in the habit of calling the aristocratic revolution the victory

of the people over their tyrant, must surely have been puzzled by subsequent happenings. If it was the people who wrested power from Charles I, how then came it that, when they had done so, no power remained in their hands? If the people took over control from the feudal tyrant, how then could it be that the people spent the next two centuries fighting for political freedom, for representation, for the elementary rights of man? If they assumed control in 1688, then what on earth was the meaning of the Reform Bill of 1832? In truth, the matter has only to be stated to show how little the people had to do with the change in England from Monarchy to Aristocracy. The aristocratic form of government has its own particular strengths and weaknesses, but democracy is neither of its virtues nor its vices.

The confusing of the issue arises in part from the use of the word *Parliament* to describe the opposition to the traditional monarchy. The confusion comes from thinking of the Parliament of the seventeenth century as the Parliament of to-day, reading twentieth century ideas, that is, into seventeenth century history. But the Parliament of the Stuart reigns was not an elected or representative body at all, in so far as the whole country was concerned. It was the organ, or machine, of the big magnates and territorial lords. It was the barrier, as it were, behind which they contrived the ruin of the King. Parliament was not elected by the people, but by the big lords, and after the change in government from the monarchial to the aristocratic, the Commons continued to be elected by the magnates and not by the people. The aristocratic form of government that succeeded the reign of real Kings of England was quite select and compact. It was an ancient form that was brought to England. Venice had known it in its best days, and Holland, when it had become a separate nation, was ruled by an oligarchy. But not in Venice nor Holland nor England did it pretend to be government by the People.

It had been a part of my intention to conclude this introduction with a note on the principle of Monarchy. The institution of Monarchy has been so long absent from the life of this country that its significance is not always grasped, nor its democratic roots sufficiently recognized. That strength which kept the powerful from becoming too powerful and the weak from being oppressed is forgotten, and to-day we only know its need. But when one looks towards the horizon, a note on Monarchy seems no longer necessary, for the thing itself, the monarchial principle, has broken out again all over Europe. We have not seen that resurrection here, nor have the French, but if it should establish itself once more in Paris, then in Europe it is like to remain. But, at any rate, much of the western world has grown tired of the ineffectualness of the Parliamentary System, and reverted to the monarchial type. In the face of the fact, a note on Monarchy seems unnecessary. Yesterday, when the failure of Parliaments was less evident, such a note would have been an advantage. To-day it is no longer necessary, and to-morrow—God knows.

J. DESMOND GLEESON.

HAMPSTEAD, 1930.

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I

THE STUARTS BRING THEIR TRAGEDY TO ENGLAND

QUEEN MARY OF THE SCOTS

When, after the crushing disaster of Solway Moss, King James V of Scotland crept away like a wounded animal and hid from the sight of men in the Palace of Falkland, he gave himself up to despair. Neither would he eat nor sleep, and those around him were very plainly convinced that he was dying. In the midst of his grief there arrived a messenger from Linlithgow, bringing news of the birth of a royal child. Some faint interest glowed in the king's face as he raised himself in the bed to enquire whether it was a man child or a woman. The messenger answered, "It is a fair daughter," and when he heard these tidings, the forlorn monarch turned his back on the lords and his face to the wall. Soon after, he breathed his last.

In this way was the arrival of Mary Stuart announced. James V died on the 8th December, 1542. Five days earlier his Queen had been delivered.

To understand all that was implied by the king thus turning his back on the world and his face to the wall would be to understand the tragedy written in the heart of a king. It is sufficient here to say that the king, after a long and troubled minority, a short and disturbed reign, was dying at the early age of thirty and leaving as his heir a baby girl of a few days old. The country was split with divisions and treasons. The very disaster of Solway Moss was proof enough of that. A strong king might have ruled in Scotland at that time, though with difficulty.

A baby boy might have aroused sufficient loyalty to give him an outside opportunity of surviving until he reached his majority, and then, of course, he must take his chance. But a baby girl in that troubled Scotland! The luckless Mary (or Marie, for so the name was written) seemed doomed from the first, as indeed she was. She was born into an impossible position and at a time when affairs of state were getting rapidly worse; and her father, when he considered the dark prospects that loomed before her, turned his face to the wall and died. It was an eloquent comment.

The tragedy of the situation turned on the extreme weakness of the monarchy in Scotland at that date. A series of accidents had gravely diminished the power of the Crown. During a period of about two hundred years there had been no less than five royal minorities and the total of the years during which the Crown was really strong, or even reasonably secure, amounted to little more than a fifth of the sum. Furthermore, every Regency has its own particular perils, but a Regency in Scotland had peculiar dangers of its own. As a rule, during a royal minority, the Regency was the prize to be fought for by the big magnates. The years of the royal childhood were stormy years, that left their deep impression after the Regency; that is, during the reign.

But at this moment in the history of Scotland, there were two additional weaknesses that threatened the traditional monarchy. On the one hand, the ancient Church, which should have been the sturdy support of the Crown, was itself in a very poor state—far worse, indeed, than the Church had been in England in the years preceding the Reformation—and on the other hand, the Scottish nobles were divided in a manner that had not hitherto separated them. They were divided even on the question of disloyalty. Many were in receipt of pensions from King Henry VIII of England, and many more were merely discontented because they were not also in

receipt of such pensions. The nation was roughly separated into two parts, and one part had already taken bribes from Scotland's hereditary foe. The traditional, or patriotic, party acknowledged the leadership of Cardinal Beaton, while the more modern or advanced, the semi-English party, looked to Arran, of the Hamiltons, for their chief.

The trouble and disorder that King James had feared was not long delayed. It commenced over the question of who was to be Regent during the minority of Mary. The leaders of the two parties were, of course, the claimants. The Earl of Arran claimed the right, since, as head of the Hamiltons, he was the next heir to the throne.[1] Beaton had been the trusted advisor of the late king. The Cardinal produced a paper, purporting to be King James's will, which left Beaton Regent, and Arran promptly pronounced the thing a forgery. Long quarrels ensued.

In the meantime, Henry VIII was beginning to plot. At the unfortunate Solway fight some of the chief nobles and gentlemen of Scotland had been taken prisoners and carried south. To these, it was suggested (probably at the instigation of Wolsey) that the moment was ripe for uniting the two crowns of England and Scotland by a marriage between the Prince of Wales (Edward, afterwards Edward VI) and the baby Queen Mary. The Scotch captives agreed with alacrity, the more especially as such agreement carried with it freedom to return to their own country. They were immediately sent north to carry out King Henry's plans. Thus, in the first year of her life, were marriages being arranged for Mary; nor had such arrangements ceased when she came to her last year.

Disagreement between Cardinal Beaton and Arran continued with increasing bitterness. Arran was suspicious of the Queen Mother, Mary of Guise, behind

[1] Lennox, who was really next in succession, was living in England, his Scottish estates confiscated for treason.

whom was the support of France. To guard against an agreement between Beaton and Mary of Guise, Arran caused the Cardinal to be arrested in the Council Chamber, and imprisoned. It was a bold move on Arran's part thus to seize power and pose as sole Regent, but Arran was not naturally a bold man and he halted aghast at the effect of his own action. He had raised the Church and the great Catholic lords against him at a blow, and these were soon threatening violence if the prelate was not liberated.

Feeling the unsteadiness of his own position, Arran began to turn towards England and to listen to Henry's proposals. But the Scottish Earl did not wish to bring about a union between the two countries by the marriage of Edward and Mary. Head of the Hamiltons, he considered himself the natural successor to the throne, and his own son, he wished to see married to Mary. Diplomatic truces were therefore arranged and delays manufactured, while Henry stormed and fumed. Meanwhile, French intriguers were busy. Scotland and France were traditionally allies, and Francis I was not going to allow Scotland to drift over to the enemy without an effort to save it. The position, in fact, now was that Arran stood shakily on his feet as nominal Regent, while France and England tugged away at Scotland below him; and all the while Scotland was divided against itself, trying to go both ways at the same time. A vigorous effort on the part of Henry to get possession of the person of the baby Queen was defeated.

Arran had been strong enough to seize Cardinal Beaton, but he was not strong enough to hold him in captivity. The Churchman was soon free again and, with the Queen Mother and the French influence on his side, he was able to resume control of Scottish affairs. The uncertainty of Arran's situation grew daily more evident, even to Arran, until, indeed, the Earl thought it advisable to seek a reconciliation with the Cardinal. The troubles of the state had been too much for him and he was not unwilling to hand over

his embarrassments, with his power, to the triumphant Beaton.

On the morning of Sunday, the 11th September, 1543, Mary was crowned Queen of Scotland in the chapel of Stirling Castle. Henry rightly interpreted this to mean that Mary of Guise's child would not marry an English prince, and, furious at the trick that he chose to think had been played on him, he began to plan all manner of violence. But the French influence was now running strongly in Scotland. French ships, arms, money and men were on the way and the whole country was at the moment in favour of friendship with France. Francis I seized the opportunity to request the renewal of the ancient alliance between France and Scotland, and Cardinal Beaton and his supporters were authorized by Parliament to conclude the agreement. The treaty was signed in December, 1543.

Henry's rage now knew no bounds. His chief purpose was to strike a blow at France, but he concluded that before he could safely send his troops across the sea to join the Emperor in attacking France, he must first crush the Scots. Hertford's ruthless raiding, known to history as "England's Wooing," then took place. The invasion by sea took the Scots by surprise and the country round Leith and Edinburgh was wasted by fire and sword. Scotland was for the time daunted, as a result, but it was also united in indignation against England, so that Henry lost more by the invasion than he gained. Before long, however, the English King gained something more satisfying, for in 1546 Cardinal Beaton was murdered at St. Andrews, and the only man who could now hold Scotland together as a nation was no more. Whether Henry was an accomplice of the crime or not cannot be decided at this time of day, but he certainly aided the criminals powerfully and through his influence they were able to keep possession of St. Andrew's Castle, which they had seized. But if the deed satisfied Henry's taste for vengeance, that was all the good

that it did him, for the English King died the following year.

After Henry's death, Somerset, the Regent, set himself to carry on the late king's policy. Its object was to get possession of Mary and, as it was not at this stage to be done by flattery, Somerset relied on force. He sent his troops north and his armies consisted mainly of foreign mercenaries. But before they took the field, a French army had landed and captured St. Andrews, levelling the fortress of the murderers to the ground. France and England were thus on the point of joining issue on Scottish soil, while Scotland could only look on, doubtfully.

Somerset made a lightning raid into Scotland, and gained a sort of victory at Musselburgh (Pinkie), but he was unable to follow up his initial success and at the end of his three weeks' campaign was no nearer to getting possession of the tiny Queen of Scotland. The real result of Pinkie was to bring about a meeting between the Scotch noblemen at Stirling, where a discussion took place as to the desirability of sending Mary away to France and out of danger. Even Arran agreed to this proposal as the safest way out of an awkward situation—and he was rewarded by the French, who made him a Duke, Duke of Castlemain.

The meeting at Stirling took place in November, 1547, and by August the following year the little Queen was under the protection of the French King. With as much state and splendour as Scotland could afford was Mary surrounded during the last days that she lived as a child in her own land. At Dumbarton Castle, with many boys and girls of about her own age, sons and daughters of the Scottish nobility, she held her little court, and among the juvenile courtiers were the four Marys (or Maries) so famous in song and story, Beaton, Seaton, Livingstone and Fleming.

In the early days of August the girl Queen sailed out of the Clyde, on the beautifully designed galley of the King of France. She was not yet six years of age, but since her birth Scotland had been in a state of

confusion and disorder. There is something pathetic in the picture of the little Queen with her fair skin and her yellow hair, but above all with her baby dignity and grace, thus escaping from her own country for the security of foreign parts. Six years she had lived, while disaster and the fighting of factions rendered Scotland an earthquake among nations. And out of this chaos, the tiny figure of a child is seen suddenly to escape.

The child Queen reached France on the 14th of August, arriving at the little port of Roscoff, in Brittany. She was met by a body of the famous Scots guards of the Kings of France and escorted from chateau to chateau on her way to Saint Germain-en-Laye, and on the journey she was met by her grandmother, Antoinette de Bourbon, Duchess of Guise, whom the King had instructed to organize the household and the education of their little visitor. As regards education, Mary had arrived in France at a happy period. The new learning for ladies that had recently become fashionable found its centre at the French court. It was indeed the day of erudite women, and Mary and her fellow princesses at the French court found themselves surrounded by the gentle and refining influence of the convent, and totally cut off from the coarse and licentious tone of society. Mary was an apt scholar and in the peace and security of her present life we are told that :

" Her main course of study was directed towards the attainment of the best European languages. So graceful was her French that the judgment of the most learned men recognized her command of the language ; nor did she neglect Spanish and Italian, although she aimed rather at a useful knowledge than at a pretentious fluency. She followed Latin more readily than she spoke it. The charm of her poetry owed nothing to art. Her penmanship was clear and (what is more rare in a woman) swift. Her excellence in singing arose from a natural, not an acquired, ability to modulate her voice ; the instru-

ments she played were the cittern, the harp and the harpsichord. Being very agile, she danced admirably to a musical accompaniment, yet with beauty and comeliness, for the silent and gentle movement of her limbs kept time to the harmony of the chords. She devoted herself to learning to ride as far as it is necessary for travelling or for her favourite exercise of hunting, thinking anything further more fit for a man than for a woman."

And in conclusion :

" Several tapestries worked by her with wonderful skill are yet to be seen in France, dedicated to the altars of God, especially in the monastery in which she was nurtured on her first arrival in the kingdom."[1]

Apart from the ambiguity of some of the terms of this testimonial and the fact that it was written for a princess, it is obvious that Mary received a good and many-sided education in France. It is amusing, moreover, to note that in her girlhood Mary was rather given to the pleasure of over-eating ; the more amusing when one considers the dignified and queenly letters that she addressed to her mother round about this time.

One great and powerful protectress had Mary in Diane de Poictiers, the celebrated mistress of King Henry II of France. It was, however, a friendship that brought danger from another quarter, for a friend of Diane, the mistress of France, was naturally an enemy of the Queen of France, and the present Queen of France was Catherine de Medici. It was unfortunate that Mary directed on herself the enmity of Queen Catherine, for Catherine was soon to become the most powerful lady in France, if not in Europe, and her dislike of Mary was very gravely to influence her later life.

At the age of fifteen years Mary was already casting spells over men on account of her great beauty. The time had now arrived for her marriage with the Dauphin of France, one reason, of course, for Mary's

[1] Conæus.

presence in the country. Francis de Valois was just less than her own age, a poor degenerate weakling—as was only to be expected, in that he was a grandson of Francis I—short of stature and unattractive of countenance. He was, however, sincerely devoted to the attractive Queen of the Scots and quite awake to the desirability of his prospective bride. Much as she must have disliked his appearance, it was the heir to the throne that Mary was to marry, and for such a consideration she was prepared to accept Francis or another even less prepossessing.

The marriage was solemnized at Notre Dame in April, 1558, and the pageantry and splendour of the spectacle eclipsed anything of its kind that had been seen in France before; even during the showman days of Francis I. Mary was clad in robes of blue velvet covered with silver lilies studded with flashing jewels, and, what with the blazing candles seen through the clouds of incense, the sun streaming in through the richly-painted windows, the churchmen and the civil lords in their brightly-coloured garments, the scene must have been exceedingly striking. The bride was led forward by the King of France, young, tall and confident, but the bridegroom came to the front timidly and shrinkingly, abashed by the roar of applause that greeted his appearance. "Largess" was cried by the heralds and showers of gold and silver descended upon the cheering crowd. After High Mass inside the cathedral, the Dauphin was proclaimed King-Consort of Scotland. Not for over two hundred years had a Dauphin been wedded on French soil, and Paris intended to make the most of the occasion. The two children seemed but a tiny and pathetic centre for all this satisfaction and applause. Well it was that they made this the time of their joy, for the future held little of pleasure for either. As the hours passed on that great day, the public rejoicings rose higher and higher.

During the ten years that Mary had been absent from Scotland little of interest had been happening

there. The influence of the French court that had been strong enough to carry the Queen away to France, was also able to confirm the appointment of her mother, Mary of Guise, as Queen Regent in Scotland. With Mary, the daughter, removed from the realm, England had for the moment less cause to quarrel with her old foe. With Mary Tudor on the throne of England, moreover, the Reformation lords largely lost their power to interfere in the affairs of Scotland, and the Queen-Dowager, by bribes and flattery, was able to keep the Scotch lords together and follow out her own French policy. After the marriage of Mary Queen of Scots and Francis the Dauphin, however, events began to move with a ruthless rapidity and deaths follow one another almost as mechanically as in a cheap melodrama.

In November, 1558, Mary Tudor dies. Elizabeth comes to the throne of England and the Catholic policy of the late queen is scrapped in favour of a Protestant policy. The immediate effect upon Scotland is that the Reformation breaks out and John Knox begins to thunder up and down the country. The driving force of the revolt against the Church comes from the Scotch nobles, comes, indeed, from the greed of the nobles. The Church has riches, the abbeys have lands, etc. Without question the moral condition of the national Church in Scotland is bad. A reform is urgently needed, but it is not for a Reformation that the nobles press, but for the goods of the Church. They have seen what has happened in England, seen how the church property came to be divided out between those who assisted Thomas Cromwell and King Henry to despoil the Church. Therefore, the Scottish nobles went after the property of their own Church, leaving it to Knox to alter the religion of the people. The nation was soon split again into two parts, " The Congregation of the Lord " which signed the National Covenant to abolish Catholicism, and which sought and received help from the new Queen, Elizabeth, of England ; and the

traditional or Catholic party that looked towards France for support. Civil war was imminent, and the Queen Mother, Mary of Guise, took refuge in Edinburgh Castle, and was guarded there by French troops. Meanwhile, the new Protestant lords swept through the towns of the south and east of Scotland, sparing nothing that was beautiful so that they could steal or smash to the prejudice of "idolatry."

The new revolt spread with great speed across Scotland. At the head of the movement was William Maitland of Lethington, Kirkaldy of Grange provided the sword, while the trumpet was John Knox. With these three went Mary's half-brother, James, the Stuart bastard. Together they contrived to manufacture a solid Protestant force, and England was now in the field openly in their favour. In June, 1560, Mary of Guise died—leaving the distracted country to her daughter. For, before the next year was out, Mary Stuart was to return to her own people.

We must go back a little to bring affairs in France into line with affairs in Scotland.

On the death of Mary Tudor[1] the King of France ordered Francis, the Dauphin, and Mary Stuart, the Dauphiness, to assume the arms of England. The argument was that since Elizabeth was the daughter of Anne Boleyn, she was illegitimate, whereas Mary of Scots was the granddaughter of Henry VIII's own sister, Margaret Tudor. The point was really one of diplomacy, as France had no intention of placing Mary Stuart on the English throne by force of arms, but as it turned out, the point became very undiplomatic, for Elizabeth never forgave the presumption and would not hear the name of Mary mentioned as her successor, even when there was no other to succeed her.

In 1559 occurred the next death, that of the French King. It was at the close of a long set of pompous tournaments at which the King of France was bent on distinguishing himself. Henry II, tall and hand-

[1] All these different Marys are very confusing.

some and proud of his skill, rode a big bay war-horse, decked, like its rider, with the black and white device of his beloved Diane de Poictiers. Towards the end of the day, the King, a bold tilter and a great rider, challenged the Franco-Scotsman, Montgomerie, Sieur de L'Orge to ride against him. Henry had so far vanquished all comers, but he still remained unsatisfied with the honours that he had won. The Scot refused the doubtful honour, but the King insisted. They rode, and at the first shock, Montgomerie's lance broke the King's visor. A splinter of the wood went through the King's eye and entered the brain. For some days Henry lingered on in agony. But on June the 10th, 1559, he was dead, and his son and daughter-in-law, Francis II and Mary, found themselves King and Queen of France and Scotland.

For little over a year Mary Stuart and her husband held the high title of Queen and King of France, and Scotland, during which period France was ruled by the Queen Mother of France, Catherine de Medici, Cardinal Lorraine and the Duke of Guise (Mary's uncle). A few days after Henry's death, Throckmorton, Elizabeth's agent, wrote to his mistress from Paris, "the Queen Mother hath, though not in name, yet in deed and effect, the authority of Regent." The new King and Queen were neither of them in good health, yet they made a great progress through central and eastern France. The coronation at Rheims was, as usual, a splendid spectacle, but over all was spread a dark shadow, the shadow of death. Before many months the young King, who had outgrown his puny strength, had already begun to develop the symptoms of that disease that was only too truly to be expected to appear in the grandson of Francis I. As he went about from place to place in search of health, the more speedily did he lose what vestiges of strength remained to him. At length he lay at Orleans, "lingering without any other hope than in the mercy of God," as the Venetian Ambassador in France announced to the Doge and Senate; and on the

5th of December, 1560, after a nominal reign of sixteen months, he was dead—and Mary Stuart was Queen of Scotland.

At a blow all Mary's hopes were thus wrecked. The proud position of Queen of France was taken from her before she had grasped it. All was to begin again. In his disease, Mary had been a devoted nurse to her stricken husband and her sorrow at his death was profound. Yet it is obvious from her letters and conversational remarks that she mourned the death of her proud hopes and ambitions more than the death of her royal spouse. Perhaps it was natural, considering the boy to whom she was wedded. But it was early evident that Mary must begin to think of the future, rather than devote her hours to mourning the past. The Queen Mother, Catherine, bore her no good-will. While she was the wife of Catherine's son, the mother-in-law was not openly hostile, but now there was no reason for her to hide her real feelings. There is no need to enter here into the particulars of their deep dislike, but it was most emphatically there.

There was talk of re-marriage for Mary and her own family, the Guises, brought forward names, including that of Don Carlos, the Spanish heir. But in the meantime Mary was not welcome in France and the proposal to return to her native land was received with pleasure on all sides. A safe-conduct was asked of Elizabeth, should Mary's ship be cast upon English shore, but this was refused. Queen Elizabeth wanted first an assurance that Mary renounced all claim to the English throne. In the absence of such assurance, the English Queen would give no safe conduct. On the contrary, Elizabeth's ships were on the seas hoping to catch Mary on her return.

Towards the close of the summer, 1561, Mary rode slowly through northern France on her way to Calais. She was riding out of the civilized land in which she had found some comfort and security, to her own realm from which she had been fortunate to escape in her childhood. Scotland was to her no homeland.

It was represented as a savage and inhospitable country, full of rebellious and turbulent people. Compared with the France that she knew and loved, Scotland possessed few charms and small attraction. But France could no longer be her home. In the land where she had once been Queen she was no longer welcome. And as she made her way towards Calais with a great train of French and Scottish nobles, the ties with France weakened at every mile she took. Here was no future, but only a dream that was past. But out beyond the frontiers of France lay the mighty kingdoms of Spain and Flanders. If she could link her fortunes with some of this power, find a sturdy companion for her own lonely adventure, she might then once more look forward. But without outside aid and powerful support, she would scarcely be able even to stand upright in her own kingdom. And in this dream she passed out of France, but it is small wonder that she passed slowly.

The Scotland from which the six-year-old Queen had been hurried was a land broken into two, one section of which looked towards England for support and the other towards France. The Scotland to which she was returning, after an interval of twelve years, was a country again broken into two parts, but the split in this case was far worse and more profound than the first had been. It was a religious difference that now separated the Scotch people and one that could not, of its nature, be settled amicably. The Queen was, of course, Catholic, and before she left France deputies from Scotland arrived in the Catholic interest. The Catholic nobles had selected John Leslie (afterwards Bishop of Ross) as their spokesman, and he urged that the Queen should land in the north where every man was of her own religion, when Huntly and the Catholic lords would meet her. With the aid of their swords she would be able to march southwards, upsetting the new religion as she went.

This advice meant nothing less than civil war.

The Protestant, or Parliamentary, side also sent

their deputy. They elected James Stuart, Mary's half-brother, to represent them. They selected him, indeed, because he was her half-brother, on account of which "nature must move her to bear him some good-will." His message was to the effect that every member of the Congregation would pay her allegiance so long as she permitted all that had been settled in respect of religion to remain undisturbed. (In August, 1560, the Parliament had approved Knox's Confession of Faith, and the Pope's jurisdiction in Scotland had been abolished.) As the law now stood, those who attended Mass were subject to the death penalty, but while the "idolatrous worship" was not to be allowed, it was granted that the Queen might have her private form of service. So much the Parliamentary lords offered their Catholic Queen, if she would leave the present settlement undisturbed. She might have her Mass in her private chapel, but her Catholic subjects were to suffer death if they had it for themselves.

The Parliamentary message, too, sounded like civil war.

It was these clear-cut and distinct parties that Mary was called from France to rule; two sections of the nation that were quite ready to kill one another on the point of beliefs and disbeliefs. And to add to the other difficulties, Mary was now practically a foreign princess. She was more French than Scottish, and indeed the very name "Stuart," is but the French way of spelling "Stewart." It was Mary who first dropped the "w" for there is no such letter in the French alphabet.

With the ill-wishes of Queen Elizabeth of England, who refused her a safe-conduct, and the ill-wishes of Catherine de Medici, the Queen Mother, but real ruler, of France, and who bore her recent daughter-in-law no good-will, Mary of Scotland, then, returned to rule the two Scottish nations, each nation desiring only the destruction of the other. She arrived safely at Leith and in her company were the four Maries, but in

her company was also the dark Bothwell. The royal galley suffered no mishap at sea, but one of the escorting ships was snapped up by Elizabeth's sailors and taken to an English port.

The Queen landed in a mist, and as her arrival was not expected, such was the secrecy that had been observed in the departure from Calais, there were few to receive her at the landing stage. She could not but contrast her welcome to Scotland with the ceremonious greeting she had originally experienced on her arrival in France twelve years before; and landing in the darkness at Leith after a voyage that had been something of a flight from the British vessels, with the prospect of dark and dubious days in front of her, the Queen wept.

Presently the news that their Queen had returned spread through the land, and as Mary Stuart and her party approached Holyrood the nobles came out riding to meet her, bonfires were lighted and the crowds began to cheer in the streets. That night under her windows the townsfolk of Edinburgh assembled to sing psalms. It was a sign of the change that had come about, but there was also in it something of the note of challenge. The folk sang not songs of loyalty, not songs of welcome nor the old national airs, but the sacred songs of the new religion. The poor Queen was forced to say that "the melody liked her well," but it must have sent her brooding to her bed that night.

On the first Sunday after her arrival in Scotland, Mary, claiming for herself and the Catholic members of her suite the right to worship according to the customs of her Faith, made preparations for the celebration of Mass. News of her intention spreading through the town of Edinburgh, a number of fanatics for the new faith seized their swords and rushed towards the palace, shouting, in the new manner, "The idolatrous priests shall die the death." The priest (Mary's almoner) fled before the frenzied mob that quickly gathered, and took refuge in the Queen's

apartment. The door of the palace chapel had to be guarded until the followers of the Reformed religion were induced to return to their homes, postponing their vengeance.

"Here is a fine beginning," commented Mary. "What will be the end I know not, but I foresee it will be bad."

It was not, of course, to end for a very long time; not indeed until the last of the Stuarts had been driven out of England. But, in the meantime, Mary issued a proclamation to her excited subjects, in which she tried to make it plain that she was not attempting to alter the form of their faith, that their religion was safe from her interference. But still, the Mass, until so very recently the centre of the religion of the Scotch, continued to cause alarm and distress among the people of Edinburgh. The very name of the thing shook them to their foundations. Knox (whose soul, he said, was distressed at the noise of cannon) did not hesitate to declare that "one Mass was more fearful than the landing of 100,000 enemies." The Reformer was, of course, the Queen's leading enemy. Mary called Knox to an interview, hoping no doubt to reach some accommodation, but so opposed were their views and intentions that they could make no impression on one another, and the meeting ended with each recognizing even more emphatically than before that the real enemy was the other. Knox was not to be charmed by the fascination of the Queen. "If there be not in her a proud mind," he wrote, "a crafty wit and an obdurate heart against God and the truths, my judgment fails me."

Knox went on his way, thundering through Scotland and stirring the people up against the "Idolators," and perhaps it is the cardinal point about the position in which Mary found herself upon her return to her own country that she was, neither now nor later, strong enough to stop Knox and his followers and so to bottle up their thunder. The whole situation

turned upon the change of the attitude of the people towards the Crown in the latter half of the sixteenth century; and the minority and the absence of Mary from her own land for twelve years, and those the formative years, had pushed forward this change of feeling. The change was dramatic, but complete, and even the charm and personality of the Queen was powerless to affect it. Before Mary's time the Crown had been regarded as the protector and defender of the poor. It had been the truest representative of the national feeling, the strong wall or barrier against internal disorder or foreign (i.e. English) aggression. Moreover, there was something almost sacramental about the crowned person. The coronation ceremony at the hands of the Church, conferred sacredness upon the person crowned. To lift a hand against the anointed monarch was sacrilegious, and in Catholic times both the sacramental ideal and the sacrilegious action were, in their opposite ways, of enormous importance. But during the minority of Mary Stuart, the national attitude altered, while the monarchy, of course, remained faithful to its old ideals; the ideals upon which it was founded. The rapid advance of Protestant principles brought large sections of the Scottish people into sympathetic relations with the victorious English reformers, that is to say, with Scotland's hereditary foes. And with this section of the community, the ancient French alliance became identified with the "Roman Anti-Christ." The nobility, greedy for the lands of the Church, lost no time in adopting the reformed faith, and their strength was increased when the Scottish barons instituted themselves the Lords of the Congregation, or the official leaders of the Protestant uprising.

The whole balance of pre-reform days was upset, and at that precise time Mary was called to the throne of her fathers. The Regency of Mary of Guise had gone down before the first popular rebellion that Scotland had known, and Mary of Guise was the last representative of the monarchy. The Crown was now

distrusted by the people, and the barons, if they were to retain the lands of which the Church had been robbed, must take up an attitude of permanent hostility to the Crown. In the circumstances, then, it is perhaps more surprising that Mary was able to keep her throne and maintain some show of power for a period of six years, rather than that she lost it at the end of that time.

In the very earliest days of her reign Mary could not but see how precarious was her hold upon Scotland. Though she won the hearts of a section of her people, she always knew that others regarded her as an alien princess. She was offered pageants and festivals and often in these the presenters contrived to convey a subtle insult. And there was always Queen Elizabeth on the other side of the border, hating Mary, but still more hating the thought of a strong Scotland behind Mary. The policy of Elizabeth—or rather of Cecil, who now ruled Elizabeth—was to belittle Mary and render her insignificant. Mary had too much claim to the English throne to be allowed to become an important Queen. Therefore it was that whenever the question of a suitor for the hand of Mary Stuart was raised, the whole force of English diplomacy was turned towards preventing the affair from coming to a conclusion. Very early in her reign Mary received a note from Queen Elizabeth claiming a right to advise the younger Queen on matters matrimonial. At one time it was even thought that there might be a meeting between the two Queens, though it is doubtful if Elizabeth, or Cecil, ever meant it to be kept. In this case Mary, while hinting at her willingness to receive advice, wished in return that Elizabeth should acknowledge Mary as her successor. That closed the discussion, for Elizabeth shuddered at the bare idea. She was exceedingly sensitive on that point of succession.

Besides the religious differences that frequently became religious battles, Mary had troubles with her nobles. Bothwell who had returned from France in

the Queen's train, was already plotting against his sovereign. Bothwell, with the help of Arran's son, conspired to seize the reins of government. Mary was to be abducted, according to plan, but what was then to be her fate did not transpire. The younger Arran, apparently, lost his nerve and betrayed the conspiracy at the eleventh hour. The bewildered Queen brought the two plotters together before her council and while Arran repeated his denunciations, Bothwell demanded a trial by combat to prove his innocence. The combat was not allowed, but Bothwell was sent to Edinburgh Castle as a State prisoner. After about three months he escaped to England—a fresh sign of the weakness of the government upon which Mary had to rely. Arran went mad, either as a result of this experience or because he had always been weak in the head.

And almost before this trouble was over a fresh disturbance arose with the Huntlys, the Catholic lords of the north. To appease her half-brother because she would not legitimize him and name him her successor, Mary created Lord James Stuart, Earl of Moray,[1] and by so doing offended Huntly, who held the honour informally under the Crown. The bad feeling between the two Earls led to battle. They came in conflict at the Battle of Corrichie. Huntly's son was captured and executed and his father died of a stroke soon after he was taken. The rising of the Huntlys collapsed suddenly, but there were several dangerous moments for Mary, when it seemed that her precarious hold on the crown of Scotland might be loosened for ever.

But in the midst of these broils and turmoils, there occasionally appeared another Mary Stuart, one who was not a Queen, but rather a gay, young person. Leaving plots and quarrelsome lords on one side and for a moment forgetting the weight and responsibility of the Crown, she occupied her time and her attendants with singing and dancing. For a

[1] Or Murray.

little she remembered only the glad old days left behind with dead friends in France, and tried to recapture the atmosphere of Parisian gaiety in gloomy Holyrood. Of course Knox and his followers were scandalized and to them it seemed that the Queen was more foreign than they had even suspected. To be bright and cheerful was a sin, and, goodness knows, there was not much in Scotland in those days to warrant anyone being bright or gay.

Certainly there was no gaiety about Knox, nor did anyone suspect him of dancing. The trouble between the religious elements increased as the days went by. Priests were arrested for saying Mass in the woods or the private houses, and when Mary tried to protect them, she found herself openly defied. Reformers made a scene in Holyrood chapel itself, on the ground that Catholic services were only allowed during the Queen's residence. The demonstrators were arrested and Knox organized a counter-demonstration on their behalf. He was summoned to appear before the Privy Council, but escaped without a rebuke, although the Queen was present. Mary was more offended still when the General Assembly endorsed his act. The Queen could only protest. She had no power to enforce her commands.

During the first years of her reign Mary was learning. She learned quickly, for the lessons were pretty obvious and she was a shrewd pupil. She saw that her queenship was nominal only and that she held her throne on sufferance, and not by royal dignity. There was still something sacred about the person of the sovereign, but it was daily wearing away. If Mary was really to be a Queen, she must have power behind her. That power, she now knew, she could never hope to find in Scotland. The nation did not rally to her support and she recognized now that it would not rally to her. The help she needed, if it was to come at all, must come from outside. In other words, if she was to be Queen of Scotland, and she never had any doubt on that point—no Stuart ever

did—she must make a strong foreign alliance and win her way on the swords of strangers. As a Catholic she naturally looked towards the Catholic countries for her ally. But with a powerful ally there was no reason for her to think only of Scotland. There was also England and the throne of Elizabeth. A Catholic ally, who could place her firmly on the Scottish throne, might also be able to place her on the English throne. And so the Queen, who was unable to rule her own Scotland, began to dream of the day when she would rule over the two kingdoms.

In Catholic countries Queen Elizabeth had never been accounted a rightful sovereign. In the eyes of most of Europe, the rightful ruler was Mary Queen of Scots. The two important Catholic countries were of course, France and Spain.[1] But France under the rule of Catherine de Medici had little will to help Mary. She had never been a favourite with her mother-in-law and, since England and France were traditional foes, it was hardly likely that Catherine would lend her aid or her armies towards placing a disliked person on the throne of her country's enemies. Catherine did not want a powerful Mary Stuart and, moreover, France had her own internal struggles going on with the Huguenots. But with Spain it was different. Philip II, among other qualities, was a zealous Catholic and in the interests of the Church he was not above supporting Mary in her claim to the English throne. There was a project of marrying Mary to the Spanish heir, Don Carlos, and placing the two on the joint throne of England and Scotland. The project came to nothing, principally because the heir to the Spanish throne would be better placed in Spain than he could be in England, and it was, likewise, feared that his mind was becoming deranged, but while the plan seemed a possible one, Mary took fresh courage and Elizabeth took fright. Queen Elizabeth was as disturbed at the prospect as was Knox himself.

[1] The Austrian power would also have been in the running, but the line lacked wealth.

Her hold on her own throne was none too secure. She ruled, and was ruled, by the Protestant lords, led by Cecil, whose family her father, Henry, had created a life-time ago in spite of himself, and who were later to wreck the monarchy in England. But the country of England was uncomfortably full of Catholics. The north, particularly, still held to the memory of the Pilgrimage of Grace and was almost solidly strong for Catholicity. The north was, moreover, furious at the anti-Catholic policy of Elizabeth's government, and the north was, so to speak, next door to Scotland.

Philip II of Spain was a methodical man, so methodical, indeed, that he moved with a ponderous slowness that made one wonder if he was moving at all. He was hampered (or helped) by what we should call Red Tape, by the regulated slowness of the political machine that he controlled. Therefore it was that at the critical time neither Mary in Scotland nor Elizabeth in England really knew whether the marriage of the former with the Spanish heir was " on " or " off." It was in a state of trembling uncertainty that Elizabeth put forward her suggestion that Mary should marry " some noble man of her own realm who besides the many virtues that might be found in him would have a special desire to unite the two countries."

There were in this suggestion of Elizabeth's two points of very different, but very considerable, importance. There was, in the first place, " the special desire to unite the two countries," which could only mean that the Queen of England was hinting at Mary as her successor, but, on the other hand, the suitor was to be " some noble man of her own (Elizabeth's) realm," who could, in no case, be a fit consort for the Queen of Scotland. On the one hand, then, Elizabeth was throwing out hopeful hints about the future, but at the same time she was bent on belittling the Scots' Queen in the present, by choosing for her a husband who was not of royal rank. While this sug-

gestion was being made, Mary did not know how stood her case with Spain, whether, that is, she was to consider the match between herself and the Spanish heir as a piece of Spanish policy. The negotiation (or pseudo-negotiation, for they were neither in earnest) was carried on with Elizabeth, and Mary asked Randolph, the English envoy, to tell her plainly who was in his mistress's mind ; that is to say, which nobleman of her realm she had chosen for Mary. Then it was that a part of the truth came out. The man whom Elizabeth had chosen for Mary's husband was Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester.

There are three reasons which explain why the use of Dudley's name at this moment was only a part of, and not the whole, truth. In the first place, Dudley was Elizabeth's favourite, or lover, and the English Queen had no intention of parting with him. She might make Dudley Earl of Leicester in a fit of generosity, for that did not mean he would go to Leicester, but merely that he would be a superior person at her own court. But if he became husband to the Queen of Scots, he could not very well hang about the English court. While he was her favourite, Elizabeth was not going to lose him. But his was a useful name to use in diplomatic delay and if Mary could be induced to consider the unreal project, then the chances of her consummating a powerful foreign alliance were removed, or at least disturbed.

Secondly, Leicester had no intention whatever of joining his fortunes with those of the harassed Scotch Queen. He admitted as much to one of Mary's ambassadors at a later stage in the sham negotiations. Leicester was sunning himself in the brightness of Elizabeth's smile, and he thought he saw before him a brighter prospect than that of being the Scots' Queen's consort. He was now Elizabeth's lover, and he thought that he had only to wait a while with patience and he would be Elizabeth's husband. The hope seemed to him strong ; strong enough to neglect other possibilities, but he did not grasp the full situation.

Probably he did not understand the strength of Cecil, but at least he was not going to be banished across the border at the moment when he was most hopeful of bringing about the happy ending to his love-making and climbing to the height of his ambition.[1]

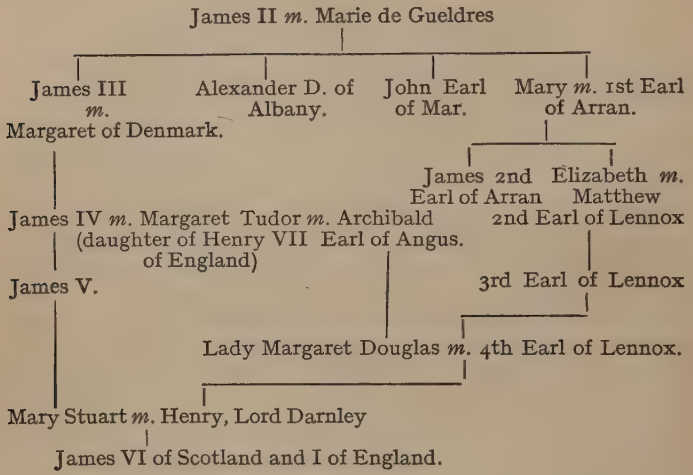
Finally, Mary did not consider the proposal seriously. She was still waiting to hear from Philip of Spain and was quite satisfied to fill in the interval with diplomatic discussion with the English court. When Randolph placed the matter before Mary, "she heard it with patience," he reported to Elizabeth. It was a subject upon which much discussion might be expended. It was useful as a delay, but there was obviously nothing in it, as all the principals knew, and, further, knew that each other knew.

It is difficult to say exactly when Mary realized that the Spanish arrangement had definitely fallen through. Such, however, was the result. After exceedingly long consideration, Philip had refused his consent to the marriage but, by way of compensation, Mary was given to understand that if Scotland could be held in the Catholic interest, the Catholic power of Spain would support her in arms, firstly, to stamp out heresy in her own realm, but next to extend the operation in order to secure her succession to the throne of England. Though she was not to be the Spanish King's daughter-in-law, she was, nevertheless, to rely upon his support, providing always that the Catholic interest was revived in Scotland. And Philip's possession of the Netherlands would enable him to pour troops into Scotland whenever they might be required.

Mary recovered her self-possession, that had been so sorely tried by recent events. She felt she had that behind her now that would justify her in going forward boldly. A Catholic marriage was obviously indicated by Philip, and there was actually a Catholic to be found who would nicely fit the position. This

[1] That Leicester had a wife of his own, the celebrated Amy Robsart, did not trouble him.

was Henry, Lord Darnley, and not only was he of the Catholic faith, but he was also of royal descent. (See table below for Darnley's descent.)


James II m. Marie de Gueldres
James III m. Margaret of Denmark.
Alexander D. of Albany.
John Earl of Mar.
Mary m. 1st Earl of Arran.
James 2nd Earl of Arran
Elizabeth m. Matthew 2nd Earl of Lennox
James IV m. Margaret Tudor (daughter of Henry VII of England)
m. Archibald Earl of Angus.
3rd Earl of Lennox
James V.
Lady Margaret Douglas m. 4th Earl of Lennox.
Mary Stuart m. Henry, Lord Darnley
James VI of Scotland and I of England.

At the moment Lennox, his wife and their son Henry, Lord Darnley, were living in England, their Scottish estates confiscated, on an earlier sentence of treason.

Mary's satisfaction with the new arrangement, whereby she was to obtain the assistance of the Spanish pikesmen to assert her sovereignty not only over Scotland (which she had never been able to rule) but also over England (which she had scarcely aspired to rule) was only equalled by Elizabeth's dissatisfaction when she learned of the agreement. For the first time Cecil and his council were nonplussed by the statesmanship of the Scottish Queen, who had so far triumphed over the difficulties that they had placed in her way, that she now stood hand in hand with the greatest Continental power; and, moreover, in the event of conflict she would probably have the English Catholics on her side. The north of England stood

sullenly Catholic and was already straining dangerously and might at any time appear in arms against their Queen. It was the Cecils' darkest hour and, under the pressure of circumstances, Elizabeth became apologetic for the first and last time in her life. The tone in which the English Queen now addressed Mary was almost humble. It was not admiration for Mary that caused the change, though there may have been respect in it, but the tone was dictated by fear. Mary wanted the Lennoxes, father and son, to come to Scotland. It was the last thing that Elizabeth desired, but she had to let them go. First the father went, nominally to look to the Scottish estates that had just been returned to the family, but everybody knew the real reason of his going. Then the son came riding over the border. Elizabeth did all she could to stop them, except stopping them. In the end she held fast to the Countess Lennox—but Mary had not asked for *her*.

It was Mary Stuart's proudest hour. For a while, it did seem as if she was about to rise above the natural gloom that surrounded her luckless reign. It was an illusion. The attractiveness of Darnley was not enough to counterbalance his own native folly. For the time, and with the help of Darnley, it might seem that Mary of Scots saw triumph before her, but that very help that Darnley gave merely succeeded in plunging her down again into disaster, and the tragedy of her life once more took possession of its victim.

The Lord Darnley's welcome to Scotland was of the warmest, for all that his father had just been relieved of the stigma of outlawry. He was young, tall and handsome, and possessed of charming manners. He immediately found favour in Mary Stuart's eyes. Not only did the young nobleman fit in with her big policy, but he fitted in with her desires. In the interest of policy she had already married one young man of most unprepossessing characteristics, but now she was perfectly willing to marry another

who was polished and charming and not lacking in wit. That he was lacking in wits was to appear later; indeed, when it was too late. But even had Mary recognized the truth about Darnley sooner, it is doubtful whether it would have made any difference to her plans for the marriage. The person of Darnley just suited the situation that policy demanded. As it was, Mary fell madly in love with the young man after a few interviews, and the Protestant lords and Elizabeth's envoys grew increasingly depressed as the days passed.

Moray warned the English envoy that unless Elizabeth took some leading step, she would find that what hold she had on Scotland, through the Protestant lords, would slip from her grasp. But there was no step that Elizabeth could take. Moray and Maitland of Lethington[1] were, meanwhile, in secret correspondence with Cecil, trying to bring about the Dudley marriage, but holding that unless Queen Elizabeth would openly recognize Mary Stuart as her successor, there was no prospect of such an alliance taking place. But this Elizabeth could never bring herself to do, nor could Cecil advise it. If once Mary were formally acknowledged as Elizabeth's successor to the throne of England it was feared—and probably with reason—that Elizabeth's days would be numbered. . . .

And all the while Mary was carrying on her sham negotiations with the English court, sending envoys to Elizabeth, playing the diplomatic game to such perfection that no one in England really knew what was happening. Yet at the same time, with her Italian secretary, David Rizzio, at her elbow, she was putting the finishing touches to her foreign alliance policy and arranging the details. Rizzio had first caught her attention at a dirge for the soul of her former husband, Francis II. He had later come to Scotland in the train of the ambassador of the Duke

[1] Mary's principal Ministers, and both pensioners to the English Court.

of Savoy, and charmed with his beautiful voice (it was a bass) his genius for music and especially his high talent for secret work of a secretarial nature, Mary asked that he might be allowed to join her own suite. She found the Italian a most useful person in negotiation with the Papacy, with Spain and so on, but this foreigner at the Scottish Court was an object of suspicion and distrust and created few friends among the Scottish nobles and the courtiers.

And in the middle of all this tangle of discussion, when, in fact, Elizabeth was adding a new complication by offering Mary the hand of the Duke of Norfolk, in place of Leicester, Mary and Darnley were privately married. It is not exactly known when the marriage took place, on account of the silence that covered the whole proceedings. There were grave reasons at home for this secrecy, for Moray, Mary's half-brother, feeling that his power was slipping from him, as the Catholic marriage loomed more prominently before him (and he was the Queen's chief minister), withdrew from court and began to organize a formidable resistance to the marriage, on the ground that his conscience could not tolerate open idolatry in his own land. He was out to rescue his sovereign from shame, the crown from dishonour and the nation from ruin ; or more shortly, to capture his sister and assassinate the man who was to be her husband. Mary received word of the conspiracy, and mounting her horse and riding away, was not there when the conspirators arrived, according to plan, to carry out their design. But the plot had sickened the Queen of the state of uncertainty in which she lived, and, without more ado, she had herself privately married to the young Darnley, or, as she had now made him in the teeth of the opposition, Earl of Ross.

Elizabeth immediately demanded the return of both the Lennoxs, father and son, terming them the "English rebels," and confiscating their English estates. The aged Countess, Darnley's mother, she

shut up in the Tower. But just at this time Elizabeth was not much feared in Scotland.

The Protestant lords led by Moray now began to prepare for the approaching struggle. The marriage had taken place, despite their best efforts to prevent it. Moray and his followers met at Stirling and signed a bond to stand by one another. They likewise dispatched a messenger to Elizabeth, reminding her of her promise to assist them and stating that now the time fell due for such assistance. Moray also circulated a rumour that Darnley was scheming to assassinate him. Darnley denied the charge, and Mary demanded that Moray should furnish proof of his accusation. By way of reply Moray fled to Argyllshire, to raise his forces. Mary now issued a proclamation, denying that the thought of "impeding or molesting others in using their religion or consciences freely" had ever been entertained by her. She also called on her faithful subjects to come to the assistance of their Sovereign. The summons was cheerfully obeyed, and the number of those who offered their services encouraged her to break the silence about the marriage with Darnley. The dispensation from the Pope by now having arrived,[1] Mary ordered her banns to be published. The public marriage took place in the chapel of Holyrood Palace, the Bishop of Brechin performing the ceremony. Darnley was created Duke of Albany for the occasion. It was enacted that he should be styled King during the period of their marriage and that all writs should run in the joint names of Henry and Mary. At the time of the marriage Darnley was in his twentieth year and Mary had reached her twenty-third.

Moray and his friends now waited for Elizabeth's aid. They waited in vain. Elizabeth had repented her promise. The Protestant lords were left to their own devices. Mary, for the first time had the People

[1] The Papal dispensation was, of course, necessary for the marriage with Darnley, since Mary and Darnley were within the forbidden degrees of kindred.

behind her. Moray was outlawed and the Queen gathered her armies to enforce her authority. She rode out against them, Darnley at her side and Bothwell (who had but recently returned and been forgiven his past treason) riding behind her. The Queen and her troops rode out of Edinburgh by one road, as Moray and the lords rode into the town by another road. The Castle, however, held out for the Queen and the rebels were forced to retreat. None of their former friends now dared to join them, and the return of the royal army forced them to flee to Dumfries. The royal army then turned towards Dumfries, and the rebels disbanded and fled to safety over the border. Moray proceeded to London, hoping to receive a friendly reception at the hands of Elizabeth. But the English Queen was in no mood to receive either Moray or his companions. Had they been successful rebels, it would have been a different matter, but, as it was, she refused to have anything to do with subjects who had risen against their lawful sovereign. Moray, nevertheless, secretly received a small sum of money, though he was told to represent it as coming from his English friends.

The fact was that Cecil and Elizabeth had other things to think of at the moment and could not spare time or troops for the assistance of the opposition to the Scots Queen. Randolph had written Cecil from Edinburgh: "There was a bond lately devised in which the late Pope, the Emperor, the King of Spain, the Duke of Savoy, with divers Princes of Italy and the Queen Mother (of France) suspected to be of the same confederacy, to maintain papistry throughout Christendom. This bond was sent out of France by Thornton, and is subscribed by this Queen (that is, by Mary of Scots),[1] the copy whereof, remaining with her and the principal, to be returned very shortly,

[1] It is, however, extremely doubtful whether Randolph was correctly informed on this point. There is little ground for asserting that the Scottish Queen had entered into a League for the extirpation of Protestants.

as I hear, by Mr. Steven Wilson, a fit minister for such devilish devices. If the copy hereof can be gotten it shall be sent as conveniently I may."

The bond referred to was of course the "Holy League" of Catholic Nations, that was being created for the extirpation of heresy. In the eyes of Europe, England was an island given over to heresy. Therefore one of the objects of the League must be the correction of English heretics, and as Mary it seemed had subscribed to the bond, it would be most unwise for Elizabeth to give her further cause for aggression. To give active aid to the Scottish rebels might bring down the weight of the newly-formed League upon England, with foreign troops coming in from the Netherlands, from France and from Scotland. This was the support that Philip had promised Mary. England's plan was to seek delay, by every possible expedient; to delay and yet again to delay, the while diplomatic pressure was brought to bear upon the various members of the League in turn, with a view to detaching any part from the main body, or causing friction between members, or in any way setting the League against itself. No help was, therefore, given to the Scotch rebels, and they betook themselves to Berwick where they continued to dwell undisturbed.

But while Catholic Europe was leaguing itself to aid Mary—among other objects—events at home, literally at home, in the domestic circle of the newly-married pair, were conspiring to thwart all efforts to aid them. The folly of Darnley was already, after a few months, equal to undoing the statesmanship of the Catholic Kings of Europe. The grave defects in the character of Darnley were showing themselves daily. He was capricious in his temper, violent in his passions, implacable in his hatreds. He was, moreover, disorderly in his habits and showed in his actions that the position to which he had attained was more than he could sustain with dignity. It had gone to his head. There is, again, a strong reason to suppose that he suffered from the terrible scourge that had

recently been brought to Europe with the opening up of the Americas, and which wrought so much disaster on the generation it afflicted.

Darnley was impossible. He neglected the council chamber for the hunting field and then complained that he had not been consulted on council matters. He quarrelled perpetually with Mary and took himself off for intervals to sulk. So frequent was his absence, indeed, that a stamp had to be made for putting his name to documents—which documents, of course, he never saw. The stamp was in Rizzio's possession. In a word, Mary was deeply concerned in high policy, and Darnley was wasting his, and everybody else's, time with petty and childish squabbles. But Darnley's ambition was not satisfied. He wanted a crown for himself and that he might be supreme in the event of Mary's death, he wished to have his rivals attainted. Briefly, he wanted the rival house of Hamilton (the Arrans) to be outlawed and the government thus to be secured to himself for the term of his natural life ; to have his opponents put out of court by Act of Parliament, and himself declared monarch until he died. Mary refused this modest request, and Darnley entered into a plot against her.

Darnley joined hands with the rebels who had taken refuge in England. They were Mary's personal enemies ; that was the only reason that Darnley had for approaching them. In addition to the lords who had fled, several others remained in Court who had been engaged in the Moray conspiracy, but who had not been found out. At their head were Morton, Ruthven, Lindsay and Maitland. A Parliament was already called, at which it was proposed to declare the rebels at Berwick banished, and their lands forfeited. Their associates at the Court of Edinburgh felt that their fate was linked with the rebels in England. The impending attainder threatened them, too. They were only too willing to enter into a new conspiracy that should stop the action of the coming Parliament, and Darnley's attitude now gave them their oppor-

tunity. Bonds were drawn up by Darnley and Mary's foes.[1] Darnley was to prevent the confiscation of the exiles' lands and to obtain their pardon. The lords, for their part, were to recognize Darnley as King of Scotland. Moreover, Rizzio, the Queen's secretary, was to be slain. Rizzio was represented as the bad man of the piece, the Queen's wicked adviser in everything, but especially in everything that affected Darnley. To add fuel to the fire, it was reported that Mary had transferred her affection from Darnley to Rizzio. It was Morton who invented this particular poison. Rizzio, he told the young Lennox, had usurped the husband's place in Mary's heart and Darnley, fresh from his quarrels with Mary, only too easily believed him. Darnley became the dupe of the Protestant lords and the report was again circulated that Moray's life was in danger, and that Rizzio was a secret agent of the Pope, who was busy preparing for a general massacre of Protestants.

The Darnley plot was well worked out. At dusk, in the month of March, 1566, some five hundred armed men assembled near Holyrood. They quietly took possession of the gates of the palace and a number were admitted to an inner court by Morton. Mary was indisposed and in the seventh month of her pregnancy. She was seated in her own rooms at supper. In her company were Beaton, Master of the Household, Erskine, Captain of the Guard, and Rizzio, her secretary. Suddenly Darnley entered by a private staircase and placing himself next the Queen, put an arm round her waist. He was followed into the room by Ruthven (who was in the late stages of consumption and coughed vilely), Douglas Ballantyne and Kerr, in complete armour. Mary, alarmed at the appearance of arms in her private apartments, commanded Ruthven to withdraw, under penalty of treason. He replied that his errand was with David (Rizzio), and the secretary, realizing in a flash that he was trapped, shouted "Justitia, justitia," and

[1] Moray, Argyle, Glencairn, Rothes, Boyd, and Ochiltree.

leapt behind the Queen for protection. She turned to Darnley, but he disclaimed all knowledge of the intrusion. Again Mary ordered the mailed figures to retire, crying that she would undertake to produce Rizzio to stand his trial, if he were guilty of anything.

Armed men now crowded into the small room, up the secret staircase. A table was overturned and fell against the Queen. Ruthven thrust her into Darnley's arms, who held her tightly.

" Save my life, for dear God's sake," begged Rizzio, clinging to her dress ; but one struck at him over the Queen's protecting arm, and the Douglas, seizing Darnley's dagger, buried it deeply in the secretary's back, leaving the weapon sticking in the wound. The assassins then dragged their victim from the room and dispatched him in the adjoining chamber, with no fewer than fifty-six wounds, while Mary vowed that the blood shed should be dear for some of them. If her child died as a result of the night's fell work, her kindred in France and Spain would exact the vengeance due.

The murder of Rizzio took place three days before the Parliament was to meet at which the lands of the rebels and fugitives were to be declared forfeit.

Mary was ill. The shock of the night's bloody work had completely overwhelmed her. While her illness was on her, Darnley and the triumphant Protestant lords acted. Parliament was dissolved and that danger avoided, and before evening of the day after the murder, Darnley was joined by Moray and the exiles from Berwick. The following morning the chiefs of the conspiracy met in secret consultation. They decided to confine the Queen to Stirling Castle, till she should consent to approve the late happenings, while her half-brother, Moray, was reinstated. It was believed that Mary would be powerless for some time to come, long enough, at all events, to allow the Protestant lords to seize control of the State and to settle themselves to govern Scotland in the name of a

Regency. They were especially anxious that she should be dethroned before her twenty-fifth birthday, now but a few months distant. For on the attainment of her twenty-fifth year, by the custom of Scotland, Mary had the power to cancel grants of land made during her minority—and all the ecclesiastical lands now held by the nobles had been granted, or taken, during that interval.

In the days preceding the Rizzio murder, Mary had reached her highest point of power. Scotland seemed, in a sense, united. She and her husband held the country in the Catholic interest and, therefore, were in a position to expect the promised help from Spain. The rebel lords were routed and their leaders in exile. Up to the very date of Rizzio's death, affairs seemed to be going well for Mary in Scotland when, at a blow, the whole dream of future stability vanished, and crushing defeat stared her in the face. She saw the whole fabric that she had so laboriously erected, piece by piece, crumble to the dust, and the agent of this complete disaster was none other than the partner whom she had taken to strengthen her hand in the building. It was one of the ironies that history loves. In a moment Mary fell from her proud position and found herself a prisoner in the hands of her enemies. Her husband had banded himself with her foes and she was their prisoner. All was over with her, all finished, and yet this strong woman did not know despair. Almost immediately, in her illness and her grief, she set herself to rebuild. In the midst of her misfortunes, she cut short her lamentations, forgot her sorrows, and fell to fighting for her kingdom, for her life and for that of her child.

No sooner did she find herself alone with her husband—and betrayer—than she began to employ her charm and her fascination upon him to regain her former ascendancy. The " young fool " as one who knew him was apt to term him, was as wax in her skilful hands. She easily persuaded him that the rebel lords, having once got possession of the Queen, would

not hesitate to rid themselves of the encumbrance of her husband, Darnley, too. There could be no place for him in their scheme to rule Scotland. The weathercock at once veered round. Darnley was full of repentance ; he was already sadly afraid of the rebel lords whom he had brought back. In turn, therefore, he betrayed them. Using what influence he still possessed, and guided by Mary, he managed to make good their escape. By night the King and Queen, with the captain of the guard and two servants, secretly left the palace. Through the dark they fled, on their way passing the newly-made grave of Rizzio. In passing, it is said that Mary observed that before a year had flown another would occupy that grave. . . . The royal fugitives reached the strong castle of Dunbar where the standard was immediately unfurled, and before the end of the week, 8,000 loyal subjects had come to the aid of Mary. Marching upon Edinburgh with her army, the stout-hearted Queen found no foe to meet her, for at her coming the murderers left the city in hot haste and once more gathered together in Berwick. Queen Elizabeth had sent them money when she first heard of the conspiracy, but when she heard that Mary had regained her freedom, she sent a congratulatory message to her Scottish sister. The assassins she commanded to leave her kingdom, but took care to bid the messenger add that England was both long and broad, and that if they did not provoke attention by drawing public notice upon themselves, they had nothing to fear. She had a feeling that she might use them yet and that one of their eternal rebellions would be successful.

Mary was now thinking of her time so soon to come upon her. She must secure peace for a few months at least. She, therefore, was at pains to extend a full pardon to Moray and his companions, though a few minor criminals were punished with death. As the time of her delivery approached, she took up her quarters in the castle of Edinburgh. The result was waited with great anxiety both in England

and Scotland. Mary might have an heir to her throne or, on the other hand, the distressful scenes through which she had been dragged might have fatal consequences to both the mother and the child. The next few hours must determine the fate of both kingdoms. When the news came it was learned that Mary was delivered of a son ; and the child lived to ascend the thrones of Scotland and of England.

The birth of a son to Mary was productive of two main results.

In the first place, Mary had found sufficient enemies when she was a childless Queen. But while she was childless it was always possible that Catholicism would die a natural death in Scotland, with the death of the Queen. The Protestant lords would assume control and dictate the religious policy. But the birth of a son alarmed her enemies, since it provided for the succession of a Catholic prince. Her enemies were alarmed in just the same way that the enemies of James II took fright when Mary of Modena was delivered of a son, one hundred and twenty-two years later. It might almost be said that the real tragedy of the Stuarts began with a son and ended with a son. But the coming of James certainly drew Mary's enemies closer together and made them keener than ever to take hold of power.

The other result was of an opposite nature. While Mary continued childless, many had appeared indifferent. So much had been suffered in Scotland in late years for the throne, or indirectly on account of the throne, that a feeling of indifference towards the Crown was engendered. But, with the birth of James, something of the old enthusiasm for the monarchy was rekindled and the hitherto unconcerned now came forward energetically in support of the sovereign. If only Mary had been able to use that feeling of loyalty and affection, her case might have prospered, but disastrous events were at hand that were soon to damp the new-born enthusiasm and, finally, to extinguish it for ever.

When Darnley betrayed his wife to the rebel lords, he was practically a lost man. When, later, he betrayed the rebel lords to Mary, he was undoubtedly a lost man. The Queen's first passion for him had quite vanished. He appeared to her now for what he was, a " young fool." He had schemed to bring her great plan to nothing and he was not to be trusted. She had no further use for him and, indeed, there was not much use to which he could be put. The Protestant lords, for their part, had no further use for him either. He had betrayed them, and to them, likewise, he was not trustworthy. Moreover, they were out for revenge. In a word, Darnley was now in the way —in everybody's way. And as if the " young fool " had not done enough to his prejudice, he must now, in a fit of vexation, threaten to kill Moray. The murder of Rizzio had served him no purpose. Not only had he not got the matrimonial crown, which was the price of his joining the conspiracy, but he now found himself without power or influence, an object of universal scorn. No one had any further use for him. He was simply not wanted.

He absented himself from court and took up his residence at Stirling, letting it be understood that it was his purpose to leave the kingdom. He was prevailed upon by the Queen and Lennox (his father) to return to Edinburgh with the object of stating his grievances. Brought before the council, however, Mary holding him by the hand, he refused to detail his complaints, maintaining a sullen attitude throughout the proceedings. He returned to Stirling and from there sent the Queen a letter, tabulating his complaints under two heads : the lack of authority that he severely felt and the neglect that he encountered from the nobility. Mary replied, truly enough, that his present lack of authority proceeded from his own fault, since he had used that authority with which he was originally entrusted, to conspire against herself, and that he could scarcely expect the nobility to give him honour until he had done something to

merit their regard. Following this exchange of letters, Darnley remained at Stirling in deep discontent. While he was at Stirling he was taken ill.

The absence of Darnley from the Queen's side left place for another, and that other was Bothwell. Various tales were told later by her enemies who had no purpose but to blacken Mary Stuart's character, of the intimacy between Mary and Bothwell at this stage. The tales are tales of her enemies, and yet the Queen's conduct frequently serves to show that the tales were not only, or not all, tales. Between herself and Bothwell there were certainly signs of great friendliness, and when people began to talk no pains were taken that there should be no excuse for scandalous talk. But how much of the talk was true, is still a problem that has no solution. At any rate, the Queen and Bothwell were good friends at the time that Darnley was sulking at Stirling and threatening to leave the country.

In October, 1566, Mary with the lords of the council repaired to Jedburgh to hold the annual court known as the Justice Ayre. Here she was seized by a dangerous illness and for some hours she remained in a state of insensibility. At one period, so slender were the hopes for her recovery, that the lords agreed, in the expectation of her death, to return to Edinburgh and place the regency in the hands of Moray. The Queen, likewise, thought she was about to die, and, fearing for the future, recommended her son to the care of the King of France, as also to the Queen of England. Calling her nobles around her, she implored them to live in harmony, requiring them to watch over the young prince but asking, above all, that he should be brought up in the Catholic faith, in which faith she was herself determined to die. She then began slowly to recover and Darnley, who had been sent for at the beginning of her illness, now paid her a visit, but departed the following day.

On the day that the Justice of Ayre was to be held, the Earl of Bothwell, the Queen's lieutenant on the

borders, was dangerously wounded by an outlaw. He killed the fugitive, but his own wound was so serious that it was thought that he, too, would die. He was taken by his men to his house, the Hermitage. During his illness the Queen, recovering from her own malady, rode the twenty-odd miles from Jedburgh to the Hermitage near the border, to visit her wounded lieutenant. There are two stories about this visit. One story is to the effect that Mary, learning of the condition of the hereditary governor of the borders, rode over to him to learn at first hand the state of affairs in his district. In this story, the Queen returned the same day.[1]

The second story tells how Mary, hearing of the wound of Bothwell, regardless of her own state of health, instantly departed for his residence. "At an unfavourable season, in spite of the danger of the roads, and of robbers, she threw herself into the expedition with such an escort as no one slightly more honourable would have dared to entrust with life and fortune. Furthermore, when she returned to Jedburgh she arranged, with extraordinary zeal and care, for Bothwell's being carried thither. After he was brought there, their life and conversation was little in accordance with the dignity of either of them."[2]

Such are the two versions, and the second was of enemy origin and prepared to serve a very useful purpose.

When the Queen began again to feel well enough, she proceeded along the banks of the Tweed and Berwick and thence to the castle of Craigmillar. At this castle she was joined by Darnley. No reconciliation was, however, effected. Darnley was proud, and his wife was too suspicious to trust him again. Each felt or believed that the other was plotting, and after a few awkward days, Darnley departed. After his departure

[1] See *Diurnal of Occurrents* and Nau's *Memorials*.

[2] See Buchanan's *Detection*. It is significant that Lingard dismisses the story of the sudden journey to the Hermitage as detailed by Buchanan, quoting the authority of Chalmers.

five of the principal nobles came forward to suggest to the Queen the idea of getting rid of the unwanted Darnley. These five were Bothwell, Moray, Maitland, Argyle and Huntly. They reminded her of the injuries she had received at the hands of her husband and of the obstinate way in which he persisted in his misconduct. They asked her to recollect in what manner he performed his duties and, in a word, pointed out that the man was an incubus. Finally, they asked if she would not consent to a divorce. Mary did not receive the suggestion unfavourably, provided always that the thing could be done with due regard to the law and that the right of her son should be in no wise prejudiced. They replied, rather dubiously, that they could find the means of freeing her from Darnley, while the rights of her son were preserved, and Mary ended the conference with the words, " I will that you do nothing through which any spot may be laid to my honour or conscience ; and therefore I pray you rather let the matter be in the state that it is, abiding till God of His goodness put remedy thereto."

Whether the words of the Queen meant " Leave the matter alone until providence finds a way out of our difficulty," or " You may go ahead with whatever project you think best, but remember, whatever you do, don't drag my name into it," is not certain. Her enemies took one view, and her friends another. What happened was that the lords, having ascertained that Mary had no wish to continue with Darnley and having no use for him themselves, went on to plan, not a divorce, but an assassination. Bothwell took upon himself to commit the crime, but the rest agreed to unite to save him from the consequences, or rather to provide that there should be no consequences. A new bond was drawn up between them and signed. It styled the King, the " young fool " and " proud tyrant," and expressed the determination of those who signed, to prevent him from ever obtaining rule over them. They were agreed to remove him by some expedient or other and each declared

that he was willing to call the deed his own, no matter by whom it was performed. It is doubtful whether Moray signed the bond. He was cunning enough to approve the deed and yet to appear to hold himself aloof.

From Craigmillar the Queen passed on to Stirling for the baptism of the royal child. "Everything at this solemnity was done according to the form of the Holy Roman Catholic Church." The names chosen for the infant were Charles and James, Charles because such was the name of the King of France, while James had been the name of Mary's own father. Darnley was at the castle, but would not appear at the ceremony. He had given out that he would leave the place two days before the baptism, but all he did was to stay hidden in his own part of the castle. Writing on the event, the French Ambassador in Scotland says of Darnley, "His bad deportment is incurable, nor can there ever be any good expected from him." And again, speaking this time of the general situation in Scotland, "I cannot pretend to foretell how all may turn; but I will say that matters cannot subsist long as they are without being accompanied with sundry bad consequences." He goes on to commend the behaviour of the Queen, but deplores "her pensiveness and her melancholy."

Early in the new year (1667) Darnley was attacked by the smallpox. It was at the time prevalent at Glasgow and, visiting his father in that city, he took the infection. When the news was conveyed to her in Edinburgh, the Queen sent him her own physician and a message that she would shortly come to him. At length she was able to fulfil her promise and there was some attempt at a reconciliation between them. Darnley, subdued by his illness, was less proud and defiant than before and Mary persuaded him that he should return with her to Edinburgh. It was a fatal journey for Darnley, but the question is, did Mary know that the journey would have a fatal end? I will give the events as they occurred and reserve comment until later.

From Glasgow, as soon as he was able to be removed, Mary brought Darnley and she lodged him at Edinburgh. She was taking him, that is, from the Lennox headquarters where his friends could be found, to Edinburgh where his enemies were gathered. At Edinburgh she did not lodge him at Holyrood Palace, but in a small house just outside the old city wall by the ruins of the Dominican church, and known as the Kirk o' Field. While Darnley lay ill at this house, the Queen visited him daily and sometimes slept in the room immediately below his bed-chamber. On the 9th of February she had promised to be present at a masked ball in honour of the marriage of two of her servants. On the evening of the ninth, Mary went to the Kirk o' Field and stayed with Darnley for some hours, kissing him on departure and taking a ring from her finger which she placed on his own. She then returned, by the light of torches, to Holyrood, and took part in the ball. She retired to her chamber shortly after twelve, and, about two hours later, the city and palace were shaken by a tremendous explosion. The news soon spread that the Kirk o' Field had been blown up with gunpowder and that the dead bodies of the King and his page had been found lying, otherwise uninjured, in a garden near by.

The conspirators had chosen this night for their work. By a door in the city wall they had obtained access to the cellar of the isolated house and had undermined the foundations at several points, placing a sufficient quantity of gunpowder under the angles of the building. Moreover, they selected the night when it was certain that Mary would be absent to blow up the building.

The question then is, did Mary know what was to happen that night when she parted from her husband with a kiss ? The Queen had brought Darnley out of the safe retreat at Glasgow and placed him in the lonely house at the city wall. Further, having slept in the same house for several nights, she was absent on the one night that mattered, and was provided

with a sufficiently plausible excuse for her absence. She had, of course, no reason to love Darnley and his death could not have been inconvenient to her. Did Mary, then, know of the fell plot and act her part for the benefit of Bothwell and the other conspirators whose aim it was to rid Scotland of Darnley? On the whole, and in spite of the several pieces of evidence that serve to show how useful Mary was to the plotters that night, it is much more probable that the Queen was innocent than that she was guilty. The conspirators knew of her movements and could, therefore, make their arrangements in accordance with their knowledge. But the strongest piece of evidence in favour of Mary Stuart is the clumsy nature of the whole plot. If she had wanted to rid herself of Darnley by causing his death, it would never have been necessary to arrange the gunpowder plot, which was not even a sure method of dispatching Darnley and which was, of itself, infinitely dangerous, employing, as it did, a whole string of accomplices. Poison would have been a much easier expedient, surer, and attended with far less danger to the person who gave it. A sick man who died of poison might well have been presumed to have died of his disease, but a man blown up by gunpowder[1] informed the whole world that the deed was one of murder. It seems unfair to Mary's intellect to suppose that she knew that Darnley was to be blown up by gunpowder

Confusion prevailed in Scotland, while the Queen's chamber was hung with black and the light of day excluded. A proclamation was issued offering rewards in money and land for the discovery of the murderers and a pardon to anyone of the party who would betray his accomplices. No news was, however, forthcoming but anonymous placards began to appear on the Tolbooth and the city walls, charging Bothwell with

[1] The true manner in which Darnley met his death will never be known. The bodies were found in a garden some distance from the Kirk o' Field. It is conjectured that Darnley, awakened to a sense of danger by the noise of the conspirators, sought safety in flight, was taken and strangled, and thrown in the garden.

the crime. The Earl of Bothwell meanwhile rode about Edinburgh surrounded by his border rabble, offering to wash his hands in the blood of his accusers. And Lennox, the father of the dead Darnley, repeatedly urged the Queen to give him justice. Public opinion pointed to Bothwell as the murderer and Lennox demanded that the same Bothwell be tried. Mary could not, of course, arrange a trial of Bothwell on account of public opinion against him, nor because of the anonymous placards, but a trial might speedily take place, if Lennox would publicly step forward as the accuser. Bothwell haughtily demanded an immediate trial, declaring that he would not allow suspicion to lie on himself for a moment. The date of the trial was announced: 12th April.

The death of Darnley marks the real end of Mary's reign. She was never Queen of Scotland after that dark event, even if she was before. Power slipped from her grasp, to be taken up, first, for a brief interval by Bothwell and then to pass to Moray, the Regent, until, many years later, he was murdered in Edinburgh as he walked the streets in open daylight. The truth is that too many conspiracies and disasters had happened during Mary's short reign for the people to retain their faith in the Crown. They could not look to it for protection when it was so blatantly obvious that the Queen had no power over her own big nobles. She had defeated them in battle, driven them into exile, and, yet again, pardoned them, and at the end of all she was in the same position as she had been at the beginning. She was not strong enough to deal with them. She was also too poor to deal with them. The poverty of the Stuarts was always present to thwart them. She could not cope with her nobles. Ever they were back again, ever conspiring anew. Never might she rely on them, never did loyalty prompt them to unselfish action. But now the throne was tottering. The Queen could not stand alone, and help from abroad was not available, certainly not immediately available. The recent events in

Scotland had given much food for thought to Spain and to Catholic countries generally, including, of course, France. Elizabeth's, or perhaps, Cecil's, diplomacy was eternally vigilant to prevent the combining of Mary's friends in Europe.

Mary Stuart looked forth at the world and looked back at her own position, and it is probable that at this time hope left her and despair entered her soul. In all Scotland there was confusion and distress, and the Scots who stood around her she knew and she distrusted. From all her nobles but one stood forward as a strong figure, as one who might make an impression where she had so signally failed. It was the Earl of Bothwell, whom Mary thus saw, Bothwell and his border men. She saw him standing, head and shoulders above the rest, and I think that, recognizing his strength and the weakness of all else by comparison, she decided to throw in her lot with him. With his strength there remained an off-chance of re-establishing a semblance of order in her much disordered state. But without him there was nothing. He might be able to ride the nobles whom she could never ride. It was a counsel of despair, but she took it. Bothwell was her ruin, but it is more than probable that the Queen of Scots was now ruined in any case.

The Bothwell trial duly took place on the date that had been appointed, though Lennox clamoured loudly for a postponement. Bothwell proceeded to the Tolbooth, surrounded by 200 soldiers, and no less than 4,000 gentlemen accompanied him. Lennox, very wisely, stayed away, since he had been forbidden to come in strength and knew exactly how safe it would be for him to venture into Bothwell's Edinburgh. Bothwell was speedily acquitted, and left the court with his large retinue. It was the expected result of the trial, and the consequence was that now everyone was more convinced than ever that the guilty person was Bothwell, and the popular feeling against Mary grew as it was seen that she had not the power and, apparently, not the inclination, to bring the border lord

to justice. Two days after the trial, Parliament was opened, and Bothwell was further distinguished by a special mark of favour, the grant of the Castle of Dunbar; a gift following on his unpopular acquittal that in no wise increased the general goodwill towards the Queen.

But now feeling surer of himself than ever, Bothwell gathered round him twenty-four of the principal peers of the realm, and yet another bond was subscribed between them. Firstly, they agreed on, or were forced to assert their belief in, the innocence of Bothwell of Darnley's death, and, secondly, they promised to promote and support a marriage between the Queen and himself, as soon as it might legally be done. As they all knew him to be a party (at least) to the murder of Darnley, this meeting of the nobles to promote the marriage of Bothwell with the murdered man's wife was about as disgraceful an event as the story of Scotland can furnish. It is, moreover, the most striking comment on the state of the country that Mary was called to rule, that can be made.

One day, soon after, Mary rode to Stirling to see her little son, whom she had lately entrusted to the care of the Earl of Mar for his greater safety. Having made the visit, she was returning to Edinburgh, when at the Foulbrigge, a short distance from the city, she was met by Bothwell, at the head of a large party of horsemen. The Queen, having no force to resist, was promptly taken prisoner with her attendants, and conducted to Dunbar Castle, so recently granted to Bothwell. At Dunbar she remained a captive for the space of ten days, nor indeed was she suffered to depart, until she had consented to become Bothwell's wife.

The question of whether this capture of the Queen by Bothwell had been carefully arranged by both of them is one that has agitated historians from that day to this. Certain it is that many people at the time believed that the capture was not genuine, was in fact a " put up " affair, and if, as is conjectured, Mary had decided to prop her tottering throne with the strong support of Bothwell, then the method or expedient

adopted, very aptly fitted the occasion. She could not otherwise marry the man who was suspected, despite the trial and acquittal, of murdering her second husband, and the marriage was far too unequal to have been undertaken in the ordinary course of events. Bothwell was the hereditary Lieutenant of the borders and hereditary Admiral of Scotland, but as a suitor for the hand of Mary Stuart, a mere nobody. The opinion of many was that Mary was not an unwilling prisoner and that she made no real effort to raise troops for her assistance. Thus did they excuse themselves for their own lack of interference. The Spanish Ambassador, writing to his king from London (May 3rd, 1567) remarks in explanation of the event : " Some say she will marry him (Bothwell), and they are so informed direct by some of the highest men in the country who follow Bothwell. They are convinced of this, both because of the favour the Queen has shown him and because he has the national forces in his hands. Although the Queen sent secretly to the governor of the town of Dunbar to sally out with his troops and release her, it is believed that the whole thing has been arranged so that if anything comes of the marriage, the Queen may make out that she was forced into it."[1]

After ten days Bothwell left his castle to conduct the Queen back to Edinburgh. At Edinburgh she was closely guarded by Bothwell's men, while the last remaining obstacle to the marriage was removed. This obstacle, if she may so be termed, was Bothwell's lawful wife, Janet Gordon, a sister to the Earl of Huntly. On the third of May the sentence of divorce was pronounced by the Edinburgh Commissaries, ordaining " Jean Gordon, Countess of Bothwell, to be free to marry when she pleased, and the said Earl of Bothwell to be an adulterer."[2] On the twelfth

[1] Guzman de Silva.

[2] It is a curious side-light on the characters of both Bothwell and Janet Gordon that after his marriage with Mary Queen of Scots, the Earl spent almost as much of his time with his divorced wife as with the Queen.

of the same month, Bothwell led the Queen to the Court of Session where, in the presence of the judges, she pardoned the abduction of her person and declared he had restored her fully to her liberty. The next day Mary created him Duke of Orkney, and on the fifteenth they were married by a reformed minister in the hall of Holyrood House. We may picture this ill-assorted pair: Mary, with her long, fair, oval face, narrow side-glancing eyes, and straight Greek nose, the stain of sorrow already stamped heavily on her countenance, in spite of the fewness of her years; and Bothwell, heavy and passionate, violent in his love of women, dominating by his magnetic force of character. He was not, as has been represented, without culture and gallantry, but yet he is best described in the words of St. Paul, as a low fellow of the baser sort.

Such was Mary Stuart just before her eclipse, a worn woman though of few years, clutching at the last reed, and that a broken one, all other hope gone both as to her religion in her own country and her rule there.

But the marriage of Bothwell was the end of Bothwell. Treason had by now become a habit in Scotland, loyalty abnormal, and no sooner had the nobles helped Bothwell to wed the Queen, than they conspired among themselves to pull him down. Some were already afraid of the man they had hoisted so high above themselves, but others were ashamed of their own conduct in placing Bothwell at their head. Some were ashamed for their Queen and, again, some were ashamed of their Queen. But, from whatever motives, the great lords now banded together to subdue the bold border chief, and no sooner had the tide begun to turn against Bothwell than, in a moment, the whole country was against him. His own associates saw plainly that unless they joined his enemies, they would very shortly share his disgrace and punishment. The anti-Bothwell league (as we may call it) planned to surprise the Earl and the Queen at Borth-

wick, and the plan was only defeated by a rapid flight to Dunbar, Mary escaping in male attire. The lords then marched into Edinburgh and proclaimed Bothwell the murderer of Darnley, a traitor, for his seizure of the Queen, and, furthermore, accused him of wanting to gain possession of the little prince James, that he might murder the heir-apparent, as he had already murdered the father.

During the next few days Bothwell endeavoured to get together an army and, with what forces he could rally round him, he set out towards Edinburgh. He came upon the more numerous and well-appointed army of the Scottish lords at Carberry Hill that stands not far from the capital. All day long the two forces faced one another, no attempt being made to fight. The Queen made a point of offering full pardon to the confederates, if they would disband, and Bothwell, for his part, offered to fight singly with any of his accusers—drawing back only when an accuser accepted his challenge. The tactics of the nobles, in thus declining battle, were successful, for Bothwell's force, faced with an enemy who watched but did not join in combat, began to melt away. The border rabble made off, and the Queen and Bothwell soon found themselves in a hopeless situation. When the nobles requested that Mary should come over to them, she was not in a position to refuse. And Bothwell, realizing that all was lost, made off like his own border troops. Nor were any serious attempts made to pursue and capture him. He would have been an awkward prisoner for the lords to hold, since they had joined him in so many previous treasons, and when they saw him retire, they felt themselves well rid of him. Mary was conducted to the camp of the Scotch nobles, to the place where she ought to be, as they hastened to explain to her. In the midst of the lords' army, she returned to Edinburgh, a prisoner.

The Queen was received at her own capital by the mob in a state of high excitement. They assailed her with reproaches as she passed. If she had not already

known it, she now definitely recognized that she was doomed. The unhappy Queen had at length lost her hold on everything. Nobles and people, they were united against her, solid at last, but not solid for Mary Queen of Scots. She was lodged, or imprisoned, by the provost in an upper part of his own house, and the mob down below shouted for revenge. During the night she gave herself up to despair. The next evening she was conducted to Holyrood House and, after an hour's interval, conveyed out of the capital by a force of four hundred armed men. She was taken to the Castle of Lochleven and placed in the custody of Margaret Douglas, the mother of Moray, her own half-brother.[1]

The revolution that had taken place in Scotland greatly shocked the English Queen, Elizabeth, at first. A threat to one crowned head might easily become a threat to another. The notion of the subject lifting a hand against the anointed sovereign must not be tolerated. Yet the revolution suited the policy of Cecil, and lifted a danger much farther away. On him devolved the task of persuading Elizabeth that no aid must be sent to, or even offered, Mary. No such offer was made. With Mary out of the way, Cecil saw his way clearly to push forward his plans for the extinction of the French influence in Scotland, for with the absence of French aid, Catholic interests in the north would speedily languish.

Meanwhile, the Scottish lords lost no time in taking over the reins of government. Mary was made to agree: (1) to resign the crown in favour of her son, (2) to the appointment of Moray as Regent during the minority. Threats were freely used to secure her signature to the document. She was given to understand that if she did not sign she would quickly be brought to trial on three charges, of tyranny towards

[1] While Mary was a prisoner at Lochleven Castle, it is believed a child was born to her; a daughter who was hurried away to France to be brought up in a convent, and afterwards to become a nun.

her people, of adultery with Bothwell, and of participation in the murder of her husband. In her distress, the Queen signed away the crown that she had made such desperate efforts to keep.

The next act was the coronation of the royal babe—at the age of thirteen months—after which Moray was solemnly proclaimed Regent. Before accepting the position he had had several interviews with the Queen, his sister. Moray represented himself as her friend, suggesting that he would only accept the regency in order to screen her from her enemies. In the circumstances she earnestly besought him to become Regent, which was precisely what he wanted. He had already been darkly hinting abroad, and notably in England, that he held documentary evidence of the guilt of Mary in the matter of Darnley's death.

As for Bothwell, after the Carberry Hill disaster, he returned to Dunbar, but shortly afterwards made his escape from the north of Scotland. He took to the sea, and for a short time employed himself in piracy. He was chased from the seas eventually by the Scottish lords, who, for very shame, were at last forced to send out ships against him, and a storm cast him upon the coast of Norway. The King of Norway, however, held him tight, and it is said that while in that country yet another woman turned up to claim him as her husband.

And while Moray and the nobles of Scotland were busy plotting their future and justifying themselves to the world at large, news reached them that Mary had contrived to escape from Lochleven Castle. It was characteristic of Mary Stuart that though despair might temporarily descend upon her, she never finally abandoned the fight. With the odds so heavily against her, she still struggled valiantly on. She had already failed once to make good her escape, before another attempt succeeded. Disguised as a laundress and carrying a basket of linen, she was being rowed across the lake and had almost reached the farther

bank when her absence was discovered at the Castle, and she was brought back. But five weeks later she had won over a new follower, a page boy of some sixteen years and known as the Little Douglas. While the whole household was engaged at the evening meal, he managed adroitly to remove the castle keys from the table by means of throwing a napkin over them. He carried them triumphantly to the Queen and swiftly and silently they left the castle, locking the door behind them and hurling the keys into the lake. A boat was in readiness and friends were waiting for her by the shore. From the Castle the guard could see the Queen escaping, but the door was locked on them and they were now the prisoners. A small party received the Queen as she landed. She was placed on a horse and taken along the coast to Niddry, and from thence, the following morning, to the castle of Hamilton, where she revoked her resignation of the crown, which she had been forced to make in the lake-girthed prison of Lochleven.

All Scotland was again in commotion, some declaring for the Queen and some against her. Royalists began to crowd round her, offering their services. With what forces she could gather, Mary took the road to Dumbarton. She could not afford to wait, she must act at once. Dumbarton Castle was strong and within she was like to find greater security. It was necessary to cross the Clyde to reach it, but there was only one bridge, near Glasgow, and that was occupied by the enemy. It was, therefore, determined to cross the river where it flows into the sea, and a number of boats were sent to the spot for that purpose. But, suddenly, the Regent, Moray, appeared with a small but disciplined force, some 4,000 men it is said, on the neighbouring high ground, called Langside. At the sight of Moray, the royalists, acting on impulse and in a confused manner, charged. They were received with the coolness of trained troops and after a sharp battle that lasted but a miserable three-quarters of an hour, Mary's force was routed and the

loyalists fled. From this fresh scene of tragedy the Queen rode away. In the course of the day she covered sixty Scottish miles, halting at the Abbey of Dundrennan. Closely followed, she resumed her southward flight the following day, having reached the conclusion that there was no safety for her on her own side of the border. She determined to seek safety at the court of her sister Queen, Elizabeth of England. Her few remaining friends urged her strongly to alter her decision, but she preferred to rely on the good assurances that she had received from Elizabeth, rather than make a further attempt, and at that time, to regain her own rights in Scotland. She sent forward to the Queen of England a diamond ring that Elizabeth had once given her as a token of love and support, and crossing the Solway in a fishing boat, landed, almost unattended, from the harbour of Workington, whence she continued her way to Carlisle. Thus Mary Stuart first entered the kingdom to which she was the heir, having been chased from the kingdom that it was her right to rule. She entered England to become the English Queen's prisoner, her captivity only ending with her death on the scaffold.

The arrival of the dethroned Queen of Scotland in England created a pretty problem for English statesmanship. On the one hand, Elizabeth had publicly declared herself the friend of the Scottish Queen, stating to foreign courts that she would restore her to her throne, forbidding her envoy to present himself at the coronation of young James, and declining to recognize Moray as Regent. On the other hand, Cecil and his colleagues were intimately leagued with Mary's foes and had exerted no little influence on the events that led to her downfall. They had a working arrangement with the Scottish ministers, which certainly would not work if the Catholic Queen were re-established on her throne. When Mary arrived in England, therefore, they rejoiced that their enemy had walked into their trap. But it was difficult for them to reconcile their plans against the fugitive

Queen with the appearance of justice, and to suggest abroad that all was well at home. They were persuaded that to hold her a prisoner for life was the best course for the security of their own sovereign and for themselves, and also for the Protestant religion, which was now not only established in England, but also in Scotland. Mary was, therefore, informed that the English Queen would use her power to replace her on the Scottish throne, to vindicate the common cause of sovereigns. But Elizabeth was to use her power on condition that the Queen of Scots should reject all offers of aid from either Spain or France. That is, Mary was to agree not to call upon, or give countenance to, foreign assistance. But, lastly, the broad hint was dropped that before Queen Elizabeth should be able to justify her interference in the affairs of her sister Queen, it was necessary that the Scottish Queen should clear herself of the suspicion of the odious crimes that her enemies charged against her. Mary well knew that her enemies were capable of charging any crimes against her. Already she began to doubt the wisdom of her coming to England. But however little hope there might be in England, her own country offered still less.

Cecil's move was a clever piece of statesmanship. The English Queen would help Mary to assume her former authority over Scotland, if she, for her part, would reject the aid of foreign princes. But before England could act, it was desirable that Mary should refute the charges of her enemies, notably that of complicity in the murder of Darnley. The whole scheme pivoted on that last point, and it was not intended that the accusations of her foes should be refuted by the Scotch Queen. Moray had already hinted at documentary evidence of his sister's guilt, and the Cecils knew to what documents he referred. In any case Mary must now accept the English conditions, and the first condition was that she must answer the charge of being personally concerned in the killing of her husband. Moreover, until the trial

was over, it was possible for Elizabeth to refrain from meeting Mary. The impending action was a good excuse both for delay and for avoiding awkward interviews. Mary must first disprove the sinister suggestions of her opponents, and that before a board of English commissioners.

Elizabeth was easily persuaded to accept this course of events, but Cecil found Mary harder to move. She introduced a hundred objections, many of them valid ones. Who was to be her judge at this trial? She could acknowledge none. Rather would she return to Scotland. But the necessary permission was refused. She was made aware that she was already a prisoner, and that the assurances she had received from the Queen of England amounted to nothing. Mary's remonstrances merely resulted in her being taken from Carlisle to Bolton Castle, it being thought that the castle offered fewer opportunities for escape. At Carlisle she had been nominally free; at Bolton she was literally a captive. At her zenith, Mary had threatened the security of the English throne; it was determined that never again should she be in a position to threaten England. Mary's enemies had seized power at home in Scotland, and the cabinet in England had made common cause with them. A Catholic, she could rely on Catholic aid from abroad, and as the claimant to the throne of England, and possibly successor to the throne of Elizabeth, she stood out a menace to the Protestant cause in both England and Scotland, and to all that settlement that the Cecils and their followers had contrived. Yet again, there was even a "Mary" party in England, a party especially strong in the Catholic north, but a party to which Essex, and Southampton and, probably, even Shakespeare belonged.

But, in spite of any English support, it was Mary's religion that was her chief danger, and it speaks well for her firmness that she was never tempted to change her faith. It might have saved her, but she would no more save herself by that means than her great-

grandson, James II of England, would save himself by a like expedient. In that faith, she had truly said, she meant to live and die.

As the Queen still held out against the idea of a trial, Cecil bethought himself of a dodge that would equally serve his purpose. An investigation should be conducted, not into the conduct of the Queen, but that of her enemies. She should not be asked to justify herself, but they to justify themselves, if they wished to retain their estates and honours. If her enemies were questioned, the same matters would be made public that it was intended should be made public if Mary were questioned. Against the advice of her friends, Mary agreed to this course and a conference was fixed to take place at the city of York.

To York then came the English commissioners, the Duke of Norfolk, the Earl of Sussex, and Sir Ralph Sadler, Cecil's man. Mary was represented by Leslie, Bishop of Ross, Lords Livingstone, Boyd, Herries and three others. On the other side, Moray came in person, with Morton, Lindsay and eight others. York became immediately a centre of intrigue and secret negotiations. We will not enter upon the winding ways of the disputants, of whom the Earl of Sussex very pertinently remarked, "These parties toss between them the crown and public affairs of Scotland and care neither for the mother nor the child (as I think before God) but to serve their own turns." The real object of this conference was darkly to introduce the documents appertaining to Mary's guilt, that had been so frequently hinted at since Mary had fallen from power. These documents were the famous "Casket Letters." After the overthrow of Mary Stuart and the flight of Bothwell, a silver casket that Mary had inherited from her first husband, Francis, and which she was believed to have given to Bothwell, had come into the possession of the Earl of Morton. In it, he said that he found several papers in the handwriting of the Queen, which proved her to have been an accomplice in the crime of the murder

of Darnley. The casket contained eight letters supposed to have been written by Mary to Bothwell, some before the murder of her husband, some after the affair. There was also a collection of love sonnets, likewise stated to have been composed by the Queen of Scots; and it was upon these documents that the English lords and the Scottish lords expected to crush Mary for ever.

They succeeded.

The reader of these letters, alleged to have been written by Mary, would assume that the murder of Darnley was planned by Bothwell and the Queen, and by Bothwell carried out, and that not one of the Scottish lords was in any way implicated. That is the cardinal point about the Casket Letters: the Scottish lords could put them forward as evidence against Mary, without any of them thereby appearing in any way involved in the Darnley conspiracy. That, to most minds, casts the gravest doubt as to the genuineness of the letters. They were *too* convenient for the lords at present engaged in justifying their own conduct in dethroning Mary, and they involved no one in the conspiracy, save Mary, whom they desired to ruin, whereas it is well known which lords signed the bond with Bothwell to put Darnley out of the way. Quite apart from this point, however, the fact that modern scholarship tends towards pronouncing the letters all to be forgeries, seems of smaller weight. Such, however, is the case. It is believed, and possibly established, that the letters were really written by the crafty Maitland of Lethington, Mary's minister.

Genuine or fake, the letters were used to complete Mary's ruin. They were introduced darkly and in an underhand manner at York and then, when their existence had been advertised, an excuse was made to cut short the York conference and transfer the proceedings to London. Mary, misreading the signs, rejoiced to hear that the case was referred to Westminster, feeling that at length her cause was to come before Queen Elizabeth herself. She expected to be

allowed to appear in her own defence. She was mistaken. Far from bringing the Scottish Queen to London, Cecil had her moved from Bolton Castle, which he considered too near the border for safety, to Tutbury, which is beyond Ripon. Mary was not permitted to attend the Westminster conference. It was not expedient that she should. When she heard of the letters, she was in no wise alarmed, but rather looked forward to the task of refuting them. But, though the accused Queen was not to attend what was, after all, her own trial, the Regent Moray was allowed to be there to accuse her. He came forward with his charges. He was admitted to Elizabeth's presence, in spite of the fact that Elizabeth had refused to recognize him as Regent. Mary suddenly realized the nature of the plot to ruin her, but she was unable to move in her own defence. The Scottish and English lords had joined hands and were together acting to rid themselves of the Queen of Scots. While the English lords sat in conference, Moray produced his "documents" and laid them on the table. Mary's advisors protested. It was all they could do. The result of the whole black business was that Moray returned to Scotland to resume his Regency and his sister remained in England, a captive. Her guilt was assumed and when foreign powers complained to Elizabeth of the confinement of a crowned head, the latter actually boasted that she had been indulgent to Mary in bringing to a close the investigation and suppressing documents that would "otherwise render her the execration of her contemporaries, and immortalize her infamy with posterity." Such were the strong words that the English Queen permitted herself to use. It was, however, Cecil who triumphed, not only over the Scottish Queen, but over the English Queen as well.

Thus began the long captivity of Mary that was to last for nearly twenty years. Her prison, not unnaturally, became a centre of plots and intrigues. Plans for marriages with Mary were made by Norfolk

and (again, after a number of years, but how different now the positions of each!) by Leicester. These plots and many more such, came to nothing. How should it have been otherwise? But while Leicester was forgiven by the Queen of England, Norfolk ended his days at the block. Yet again, the Catholic north of England rose, hoping by so doing to relieve themselves of the terrible persecution to which the Cecil policy subjected them, and to restore the old form of worship to their country, but Mary was the centre, or perhaps the excuse, for the rising. The insurrection was put down with great cruelty and by the employment of foreign mercenaries, but Mary still remained a captive. She was more securely guarded now than ever, but still Cecil and his council shrank from the responsibility of putting her to death.

And so the years went by while the Scotch Queen languished in prison and her son was growing to manhood in his native land. The division between James and his mother was complete. He had been brought up in the reformed faith, in a land where Catholicity was banished, and she remained a Catholic. She had been parted from him when he was a baby, not yet two years old. They were strangers to one another, and slowly it was borne in upon Mary that she had no reason to look to her son for help when he should become King of Scotland. James was under the power of Cecil's agents. He had been brought up to abandon his mother and to hate her religion. And to the crown of England, apart from his mother, he was the legitimate heir. She was the one obstacle that might bar his way to the great honour that his birth opened to him.

But at last his mother, Mary Queen of Scots, was put out of the way, and the path to real kingship lay straight before James. Having lived through a lifetime of plots, one final plot was woven around the luckless Queen, and this plot she did not survive. It was the famous Babington conspiracy. The mind behind the conspiracy was Cecil's and it had for its

aim the removal of Mary from her sphere of menace, to settle one particular danger once and for all. Cecil and his adherents planned well, as they invariably did. For their purpose they made use of the *agent provocateur*. He was dispatched to Paris to urge the more violent Catholic refugees to some action against Elizabeth. The trap was successful. A number of individuals were banded together, amongst whom was the gallant but indiscreet young man named Babington. Opportunity was afforded Mary to get in touch with the plotters, she, for her part, believing that the whole movement was wrapped in the deepest secrecy. In point of fact, the letters to her and from her went through the hands of Walsingham, the head of the council's secret agents, and Cecil's right-hand man. Meanwhile, the Babington group went on to drag Mary deeper into the intrigue by plotting the murder of Elizabeth and the rescue of the imprisoned Queen. Nor did they neglect to prepare her proclamation to be issued when she was free. This particular document must have caused Walsingham much amusement.

But the plot, as it stood, did not satisfy the requirements of Cecil. He wanted, for his purpose, to get Mary implicated in that design to murder Elizabeth. It was necessary that the accusation against her should be one of high treason, so that the penalty might be death. At the right moment, therefore, her secretaries were seized and under the threat of torture they were made to say that Mary had written a letter in which she expressed her approval of Elizabeth's assassination. Now, Mary denied ever having written such a letter, and demanded that the alleged document should be produced. If such a letter ever existed, it must have passed through Walsingham's office, especially as the incriminating words said to be in the letter were quoted. Sentences from the supposed letter were used against Mary upon which the Queen of Scots was condemned, and yet the letter was never produced. Once more, documentary evidence was

given against Mary, but the documents were not shown her. The only evidence that the Cecil agents put forward was what they said was a copy of the incriminating letter, and no proof was given of its authenticity. On the strength of the copy, however, the Queen was condemned to death. Elizabeth disliked this public manner of getting rid of Mary, a method of removing a rival that made her directly responsible. She would have preferred Mary to have been secretly taken off. She delayed signing the death warrant and even when she had signed it, delayed sending it. But Elizabeth was not her own mistress. Cecil and his followers ruled, and the Queen of England was forced to yield to them. And as for James, Mary's son, how did he view the whole business? Well, James would have liked to save his mother, in order to save his own face, but he would not take any action that might prejudice his right to the English throne. He was informed that if he would step up to the English throne at Elizabeth's death, he must do as he was bid now; and he did.

It was on the 7th of February, 1587, that Mary at Fotheringay heard the commission for her execution read to her. She listened without change of countenance. The day, she said, that she had long desired had at last arrived. She had lingered in prison for nearly twenty years. She asked when she was to suffer and she was answered, "To-morrow morning, at eight o'clock." She had reached her last complete day. In a few hours all her misfortunes would be at an end.

Her last night upon earth, Mary Stuart divided into three parts. The first portion she assigned to the arrangement of her domestic affairs and to the making of her will, after which she wrote letters of farewell to her confessor, to her cousin of Guise, and to the King of France. The second portion she gave up to devotion and to preparing herself for her end. In the quiet of her closet she devoted herself to prayer, and to reading, finding consolation in the recollection

of the passion of Christ and in a sermon on the death of the penitent thief. About four in the morning she retired to rest, but she did not sleep. Her lips moved constantly, and her mind seemed lost in prayer.

At daybreak her household assembled about her to hear her last wishes. She read over her will to them, and distributed pathetic little presents and money among them, after which she bade them farewell. She then returned to her oratory to await her summons.

In the great hall of the castle of Fotheringay there had been raised a scaffold, covered with black cloth and surrounded by a low railing. At the hour of seven the big doors were thrown open and the gentlemen of the county and their attendants entered. About eight, a message was sent to the Queen. Taking the crucifix from her little altar, she descended the staircase leading to the great hall. She was joined in her progress by the sheriff and his officers, her jailors, Paulet and Drury, and Queen Elizabeth's representatives, the earls of Shrewsbury and of Kent. Mary walked last in this procession. She had donned her richest dress, feeling it appropriate to her rank thus to robe herself for execution. She advanced with firm step, nor did the gaze of the spectators, nor the sight of the executioner and the block, put her out of countenance. The grace and majesty of Mary Stuart did not desert her, indeed were more pronounced, at the end. She did not fear death, though her enemies might fear killing her. No Stuart was ever afraid to die.

Mounting the scaffold with the assistance of Paulet, she seated herself on the seat prepared for her. On her right stood the earls and on her left the sheriff, but facing her, the executioner from the Tower, robed in black. She addressed the assembly and all heard her clear, firm voice. She reminded her listeners that she was a sovereign princess and not subject to the laws of England. Nor did she fail to add that she died for faith, as indeed she did.

She then suffered her maids to prepare her for the block, but here the executioner was moved to interfere, fearing the loss of the usual perquisites. A handkerchief, fringed with gold, was passed over her eyes and the executioner, guiding her by the arm, led the blinded queen to the block. Kneeling down she repeated her last prayer. She spoke it to herself, yet she was heard in that silent hall to speak the great words, "*In manus tuas spiritus commendo. . . .*" The grief of the spectators could no longer contain itself, and there was heard a sound like a muffled groan. It disconcerted the executioner, who trembled, and missed his mark, inflicting a deep wound in the lower part of the skull. The Queen remained motionless, while the headsman, at the third stroke, severed the head from the body. When he held it up in the traditional manner, the horror-stricken audience perceived that the face was so convulsed and distorted that they were unable to recognize the features.

" God save Queen Elizabeth," cried the executioner.

" So perish all her enemies," added the Dean of Peterborough ; but there was not found one in the hall to answer "Amen."

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So perished James V's daughter, a fitting end to her tragic career, all her plans brought to nothing, all life's promises unfulfilled. Born within a few days of her father's death, she began her life amid confusion and turmoil. At the age of six, she had been hurried from her native land to be brought up a foreign princess at the court of France. Married to the Dauphin of France, she had seen him die before even she could become the Queen of France. Back in Scotland, she arrived just after the Reformation had divided the country into two parties. These two hostile groups she had tried to lead and control, only to find herself powerless in the attempt. When, at length, she had, with infinite care, contrived to obtain promises of foreign support, she had seen the fulfilment of the promises rendered difficult, and finally impossible, by

the character and conduct of Darnley, whom she had married to further her schemes. Darnley, in turn, was killed, and she turned desperately to Bothwell, the last strong man in the realm, the forlorn hope, and Bothwell crumbled at the touch and vanished across the sea. The Queen found herself in prison, in the island castle of Lochleven, while her brother seized the sceptre with his own hand. Not yet defeated by Fate, the determined woman contrived to escape and raised a following. Her army was crushed, and she was in flight. She sought sanctuary in the realm of England, to which crown she was the natural heir, lured thereto by the promises of a princess. Once more she found herself in prison, and this time there was no escape. Near twenty years were to pass, and still she was only in her forties. Her years were packed full of adventures, and each in turn had become a fresh misfortune. But already she had lived too long and the last retreat after the early, hectic years was drawing to a close. The executioner's axe descended awkwardly upon the shapely neck, and the tragedy of the life of Mary Stuart was complete. For the nonce, even her enemies were satisfied.

Such, in short, was the tragic story of Mary Queen of Scots, and it was in miniature a faithful copy of the larger and more striking story of the Stuarts in England, that was to occupy this country for the next century.

One more question shall we ask and answer, for it is of deep interest. Why, after all those years of captivity, was it considered necessary to put Mary Stuart to death ? Why was she not put to death at the beginning, rather than at the end of the lengthy imprisonment ? The answer is worth understanding ; nor has it been sufficiently understood by historians. Mary had been a captive in England since her twenty-fifth year, since 1568, but it was only in '85 or '86 that it was decided to put her to death. And the main reason that determined Cecil, and those who worked with him, to insist upon her death was the state of

Queen Elizabeth's health. Elizabeth's health had always been poor, but in the '80's it had given cause for alarm. It was feared by Cecil and the council that Elizabeth would die before Mary, thus leaving the Scottish Queen to succeed her on the English throne. And they feared that Catholic feeling was too strong in England to permit of their keeping Mary still in prison after the last Tudor was dead. Her claims were too strong to be set aside. In short, if Mary did not succeed to the throne, there would be civil war and, perhaps, a doubtful issue, and if she *did* succeed, the anti-Catholic policy, upon which the fortunes and position of the Cecils and their adherents depended, would be in danger; very grievously in danger. It was at least a peril from which they shrank. But if Mary were out of the way, why then Elizabeth might die any day she pleased, and the anti-Catholic policy, on which the large new houses relied, might continue uninterrupted, for the next heir after Mary was her own son, who, as has been said, had been brought up on Calvinist principles and to abhor Catholics, and who was, moreover, already under the control of the English agents. He was a safe King to have, as Cecil and his men knew, and their judgment received the confirmation of events. But Mary would not be a safe Queen. She must die an unnatural death, since Elizabeth threatened to die a natural one. But it all turned on the health, or rather ill-health, of Elizabeth.[1]

[1] See Hilaire Belloc, "How the Reformation Happened." The debt of many modern writers on history to Mr. Belloc is great, and I may acknowledge my own gratefully here, though it is incurred in several places.

II

THE STUARTS CROSS THE BORDER

JAMES I

With the death of Queen Elizabeth, the Scottish House of Stuart found itself in possession of the English throne. Their tragedy was, therefore, transferred from their own to this country. The real tragedy of the Stuarts was that they were called to the English throne at the very time that the throne itself had been undermined, and the central monarchy was being mastered by the new, big lords in the name of Parliament. The original author of the tragedy was, of course, King Henry VIII, but he was safely out of the way before the effects of his misadventures became obvious. It was Henry's children who were first to feel the new weakness of the Crown, but it was the Stuarts who suffered on account of that weakness. They took the sword of State, and it broke in their hands.

Two main causes account for the decline, and ultimate collapse, of the popular monarchy. The first was the seizure and disposal of the church lands at the time of the Reformation and the consequences that sprang from the transferences, and the second, the decline of the value of currency, or money, in this country during the sixteenth century. These were the superior causes. Inferior causes there were, of course, and in abundance.

The weakness of Henry's religious policy followed from the fact that although he was able to take possession of the church and abbey lands and goods, he was not strong enough to keep in his possession that which he had so taken. His eternal poverty,

not entirely his own fault, though he was a great spendthrift, led him to lose these great church gains, that might otherwise have gone to establishing the House of the Tudors on a firmer basis. Bit by bit, they went to one man and another, here as a gift for services rendered, there as a hasty sale and at a nominal value, and, in course of time, the Crown found that it had created a new ring of large and increasing fortunes round itself. A little band of what we should now call millionaires grouped itself around the monarchy and as the fortunes of the millionaires rose, so the strength of the Crown declined. As time went on and the fortunes of the new rich tended to become permanent possessions, the new lords, the Cecils, the Russells, the Cavendishs, the Cromwells, and so on, became more and more important persons in the state. They hemmed in the King. Still, the Crown might not have become entirely dependent upon these new fortunes but for the second point mentioned above, the decrease in the value of money in England, and indeed in Europe, during this period.

The normal Crown dues were fixed. Deriving from feudal times and customs, the royal revenue represented a certain figure. At one time this figure was sufficiently large to cover the ordinary expenses of the sovereign. Special allowances were made in times of war and for abnormal events, and so forth, but for ordinary practice the customary dues sufficed. But, while conditions were rapidly changing, the royal income remained at the old fixed rate. The value of the income altered, in point of fact, from reign to reign, although each monarch was receiving the same amount. It was the discovery of the potentialities of America that was one of the great reasons for this change in values. New gold began to pour in from Spanish America, and all over Europe the value of money was forced down and still further down. Half an ounce of gold[1] in Henry VIII's reign could

[1] Roughly a labourer's living for one year.

scarcely be equalled by three ounces of gold in Charles I's reign, roughly one century later. In a hundred years, then, the value had declined by six, and the process was continuing. And yet, both Henry and Charles were in receipt of incomes represented by the same figure. Further, though the value of the income was becoming less and less, the necessity for spending rose more and more. Armies must be larger and better equipped to suit new conditions, while the developing arm of artillery was a fresh and heavy expense.

The true royal incomes, then, were in steady decline at the same time that the private incomes of a special group of men within the state were in a condition of steady increase. And, moreover, with its decreasing means, the royal resources in lands were being rapidly lost to the Crown and gained by the new men. In these circumstances, the time arrived when the royal income was definitely insufficient for the King to carry on. The Crown dues had to be subsidized and the subsidy, naturally, came from the new rich lords. Nor was this subsidy given for nothing. The Crown was forced to turn towards the big fortunes for relief and thereby became increasingly dependent upon them.

Such is the secret of the failure of the popular Monarchy in England. The King was too poor to do without the help of the large financiers, and, by the loan of their money, the financiers gained a hold over the King. It was on this very question of subsidy that Cecil and his partners were able to exercise control over Queen Elizabeth. It was in order to secure her money that she was forced to yield to their requests, notably in the matter of the public execution of Mary Queen of Scots. James I, who followed Elizabeth to the throne, was a timid man, foolish, yet no fool. He was shrewd enough to grasp the position of the Monarchy, and, for all his belief in the Divine Right of Kings, allowed Cecil (the second Cecil, that is) to guide him. Charles I, his son, was not foolish, yet in this he was a fool, that he kicked against the con-

ditions that now surrounded Monarchy. He saw the sacred trust, which had been given into his keeping, being stolen bit by bit. He saw the dependence of the monarch upon the large owners becoming daily more abject, and he struck. He rebelled against those who would appoint themselves his pay-masters—and he lost his head. His belief in the Divine Right of Kings (an article of faith with him, though it is difficult to know why he was so tenacious to it; he did not find it shining in his father's career, and one would say, still less in the career of his grandmother, Mary Queen of Scots) led him to challenge the practical rights of the new big fortunes to dictate to him because he had lost *his* fortune, and he lost the battle that ensued. As for his son, Charles II, he was brought back to England from foreign exile to wear the crown, but scarcely to be a king. He returned more as a salaried head of the state, almost as a salaried servant of the rich. He had much of his grandfather's common sense, or grip on reality, and he spent his time in preserving the appearance of kingship, at the price of dignity. If he could not be a king, he could at least look like one, and it is a strange fact that in thus looking like a king, he very nearly managed to be one. But to his brother, James II, kingship was again sacred and the king an anointed person. He insisted, as his father had done, on being a king and for so doing was driven from the country, to end his days in exile. The kings went down, and those who controlled the longer purse triumphed. The kings departed and the Aristocracy reigned in their stead. But the campaign lasted for more than a century and the ultimate victory was by no means inevitable. It might easily have ended the other way. The kings were up against a power that they were unable, but only just unable, to break—and that was the tragedy of the Stuarts. And the key to their tragedy was finance.

The struggle that took place in the seventeenth century was the struggle between the Crown and the

new and monstrous fortunes and the struggle ended with the victory of the big fortunes: the triumph of the Whigs. But the two determining factors to remember in connection with the story of the four Stuart Kings of England are worth repeating:

(1) The decline of the value of money, which was especially emphasized during "Stuart" years; a decline that continued throughout the seventeenth century.

(2) The existence of large independent owners of great fortunes—originally derived from the spoil of the church at the time of the Reformation—which made it necessary for the Crown to obtain something from these rich new lords, in order to maintain itself. Such assistance could only be obtained (*a*) by force, or (*b*) by voluntary, but conditional, grant. To obtain by force, the Stuarts failed. What they were able to get granted to them by the rich lords, merely served to place them in subjection to a little group of their own subjects.

The seeds of disruption had been sown before the Stuarts crossed the border, but it was during their reigns that the institution of monarchy perished in England.

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James I of England (VI of Scotland) was born at Edinburgh in 1566. He was baptized at Stirling the following year, his father, Darnley, absenting himself from the ceremony. Later, he was sent to the Earl of Mar for safe keeping, his mother seeing him again just before her capture by Bothwell. Mary's trials quickly followed, and she was soon a prisoner in the island castle of Lochleven. Moray seized the reins of power, governing the kingdom, after he had deposed his sister, in the name of the infant, James. When Mary had been forced to resign the crown, the coronation of the little prince was proceeded with.

The royal baby had attained the age of thirteen months when he was sworn, anointed and crowned in the High Church at Stirling. It was a curious ceremony. The child lay asleep on the throne and the

documents of surrender that had been taken from his mother were solemnly read out, it being asserted that Mary Stuart willingly and freely renounced the throne. There was a difficulty about the swearing of the unconscious infant. The coronation oath was, therefore, taken for him by Morton (one of the murderers of the little prince's father, and a man who had already taken more oaths than were good for him) as the royal proxy. The oath, by the way, had been added to for the occasion and it now bound the king to serve God according to His Holy Word established in the new Kirk. John Knox then came forward to preach a sermon, but even his thunders, that had aroused all Scotland, failed to arouse the sleeping infant. The coronation was then performed, the crown being held over the tiny child's head. And still James slept.

It was eleven years later that James assumed control of government, having in the meantime survived no less than five Regents—for Regents were cheap (in more senses than one) in those excited days of Scottish history. One of the effects of the excitement of those days was to fill James's head with a haunting fear of assassination, a fear not by any means groundless. His doublets he wore quilted, and his breeches pleated and stuffed, for the purpose of defeating the assassin's blade. This terrible fear of a violent death never left James, as we shall see. In the circumstances, it is not surprising that he early turned his mind towards a policy of peace, nor is it strange that he continued his policy of peace all through his life ; even when it was peace without honour. The surprising thing, perhaps, is that he did enjoy a measure of peace, in spite of his perpetual policy. The earliest manifestation of his desire to avoid all forms of strife was the Peace Banquet that the new King called at Holyrood, and to which he summoned all his nobles who had quarrelled with one another. There were a great many guests. The banquet was followed by a procession to the Cross of Edinburgh, in which the nobles walked two and two, each man finding himself paired with

his own particular enemy. All were called upon to heal their wasting feuds and to take a pledge of brotherly kindness. The nobles responded "with solemn expressions of joy" (which sounds slightly contradictory) and embraced one another, nor is it difficult to believe that the populace was delighted and even danced for glee. Whether as a result of this extraordinary reconciliation, or because the nobles had wasted and worn themselves out with their eternal strife, certain it is that James did enjoy some degree of peace afterwards in his distracted kingdom.

The poverty of James, or of Scotland, made the King a pensioner to England, and the bribe of the throne of England on the death of Elizabeth, reduced him to making no real effort to save his own mother. It should be remembered, however, that he had no knowledge of his mother, except through her enemies, and that he had been trained to regard Mary's religion as an abomination. It was with the promise of England before him that he struggled on in Scotland. So long as he could keep his throne in Scotland, at whatever cost or concessions, he would one day step up to the English throne. Meanwhile, he concerned himself with affairs matrimonial. He had no very clear ideas on the subject himself. He seemed to care very little whom he married, but in the end with the aid of Elizabeth's counsellors, negotiations were opened with the King of Denmark, and it was agreed that the second daughter of that monarch, Anne, should become James's bride. Proxies were sent to Denmark for James, and when the ceremony of marriage was completed, the bride embarked for her new country. Time after time was the Danish fleet driven back after it had put to sea, and it was generally agreed that witchcraft was at work to prevent the normal happy ending to the affair. The fleet simply could not make Scotland. On the last occasion, it was driven against the Norwegian coast, the bride there landed, and an urgent message of distress was sent to James in Scotland.

It was then, if never again until his death, that James showed he was a real Stuart. He crept silently away from Scotland to rescue his stranded bride in person and in defiance of all witches. He left two documents behind him, one stating his reason for thus stealing away, and the other containing his instructions for the governing of the kingdom in his absence. It was six months later that James came sailing back in triumph to Leith, bringing with him his Danish bride. They had been wedded in Norway, and yet again, in Denmark, so that even the severest members of the Kirk could have no doubt about their being married. A special welcome had been ordered, since, as James pointed out, "a King of Scotland with a newly-married wife does not come hame every day." Had his own grandson, Charles II, by some miracle been within speaking distance, he might have replied that a King of Scots usually came "hame" with a mistress. But there was to be no cynicism about this hame-coming, and James had sent detailed instructions as to arrangements, down to the last saddle-horse.

Great excitement prevailed, for on a small scale this was, or looked like, a revival of the monarchial ideal in Scotland. The country had been so long in a state of distress that people sometimes looked back with wistful longing to those far-off days when there had been a king and queen holding court at Holyrood. For a generation now, there had been no royal consort at Edinburgh. The happy pair at length made their appearance in the capital and were greeted with an oration of two hundred Latin verses. They then listened to a sermon of thanksgiving for their safe voyage. The coronation (1590) was as splendid an affair as the destitute condition of the country could render it, and the state of that destitution may perhaps best be gauged by the circumstance of James having to borrow a pair of silk stockings from one of his own nobles in order that he "might not appear a scrub," on the great day.

One of the first public actions after the coronations was that of bringing the witches to trial who had worked their wicked art to prevent the arrival of the Queen. The leading witches in the kingdom were seized and sentenced in quick time. The hunting of witches, it may be said, rose to quite a serious pitch during the reign of James, not only in Scotland, but later when he came to England. James was profoundly superstitious and was convinced that his duty lay in ridding the country of the witch-pest.

Religious strife was still rampant in Scotland. The republican nature of Knox's Kirk was repugnant to the spirit of monarchy. It was only by the exercise of great patience that the King triumphed over his religious opponents and dictators in the end. He played a waiting game, keeping trouble always at bay by wise concessions and diplomatic agreement, careful, meantime, to maintain a regular correspondence with England. If he could keep his feet somehow in Scotland, by the exercise of any tact, by the sacrifice of any dignity, the day would surely arrive when Elizabeth of England must die, and James would be King of that country in her stead. England was his land of promise, his great hope. In England all would be reversed, poverty changed to affluence, dignity restored. Stepping to the throne of a mighty monarch, James, too, would become mighty, and all the slights of to-day would be forgotten in the greater glory of to-morrow.

And so, eventually, it happened. On a March day in 1603 there came posting along the Great North Road from England to Scotland, Sir Robert Carey. It was Sir Robert who, sixteen years before, had carried the news to James of the death of his mother, Mary Queen of Scots. But he brought other tidings to-day, news of the death of another great Queen. Elizabeth of England was dead, and the death of Queens was heartening to James. Between Richmond and Holyrood, Carey had taken less than three full days, and at Holyrood he delivered his message. The official announcement arrived two days later.

" On Thursday, the 24th of March of this year 1603 about two o'clock in the morning, died that famous and renowned Queen Elizabeth." So ran the communication from Cecil to James.

The influence of Cecil was so thoroughly established that he was able to get the accession of James, the Scottish King, proclaimed in England before the death of Queen Elizabeth was publicly known. The officers of state assembled, and James was proclaimed by the voice of Cecil himself, first at Whitehall, but afterwards at the Cross in Cheapside. The citizens were satisfied. They found in the occasion a good excuse for bonfires and the ringing of bells. They can scarcely have loved King James, whom they had never seen and who was to them a foreigner, but they had no objection to a holiday, and, perhaps, they were not altogether sorry to lose their " Good Queen Bess."

James received the news of his accession with transports of joy. He was now in his thirty-seventh year and had been anxiously waiting this news for the last sixteen years ; since the execution of Mary Stuart, in fact. He was tired of the restrictions imposed upon the Scottish Crown, both by the lack of money that checked his work at all points, and by the levelling principles of the Kirk that derided his high notions of royal dignity. He had been looking forward to England with eager eyes. England gave him visions of wealth and influence. He lost no time in taking possession of his new kingdom, telling the Scots that he would return to them every two years. And when he found his progress cheered by the multitudes, and found himself received by the English nobles and gentry with sumptuous entertainments, he believed that he had at last been allowed to enter his Promised Land.

James may have been the wisest fool in Christendom, but he was certainly wise enough at the outset to confirm Cecil in his office. A new council was formed, in which six Scotsmen were introduced, but lest the balance should be upset by their coming,

six new English nobles were also added. James intended to start well. Honours were conferred with a generous hand. New barons were created, amongst whom was to be found Cecil, the Secretary of the Council. In these first months, indeed, no less than seven hundred knighthoods were distributed.

Such prodigality in honours may sound lavish, but it was very necessary. Not only did the King wish to gather round him a strong adherence, but the early English enthusiasm was rapidly beginning to cool towards him. Personally he was an unpleasing type of individual. His gait was ungainly; it is described as "circular," whatever that may mean. His features were repulsive. His tongue seemed too large for his mouth, and his eyes, large and vacant, rolled in a distracted and distracting manner. He was not kingly in his appearance and, as a man, did not win affection. Furthermore, he disliked crowds because he feared them. He walked always in terror of the assassin's knife, and when the people came forward to greet him in his progress towards London, he withdrew in quaking haste. The citizens soon forgot to cheer their new king. The bonfires went out, the bells ceased to ring.

Even before the coronation could take place there was a conspiracy to seize the royal person. It came to nothing, owing to the vigilance of Cecil, who managed to know all that was going on in the kingdom. He employed spies, or secret agents, on a large scale. The plotters were some of the discontented nobles who had been refused office by the new King, and to whom the confirmation of Cecil in his powerful position was hateful. Cecil was of the new nobility, and the older lords detested him as an upstart. But the Secretary was rapidly winning over the old nobility and soon the old and the new fortunes were to form a solid and, therefore, unbreakable, opposition to the sovereign power. In the case of this conspiracy, Lords Cobham and Grey were arraigned before their peers, but the Earl of Northampton, with greater

prudence had backed out of the conspiracy before he was firmly engulfed in it. Another of the conspirators, it is interesting to note in view of later events, was the adventurous Raleigh.

The capture of the conspirators was followed by the coronation. James, probably on account of some unconscious Catholic prejudice, for it could have no relation to his Calvinistic training, had appointed his saint's day (i.e. the festival of St. James) for the ceremony. Although a dangerous mortality raged in the city and despite the fact that he was mortally scared of it, James would not hear of any postponement. "Delays are dangerous" was a motto that he had often heard on the lips of his Scottish teachers, and he was determined to make the English crown his own. As the accession had never been confirmed by Act of Parliament, James was, in point of fact, only a claimant to the throne before he was crowned. The ceremony was hurried through, without the customary show and magnificence, by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and only in the presence of those who had been summoned to attend. As soon as the shortened business was over, the King fled from Westminster to the country to escape the infection. There was often something rather ridiculous about the unfortunate James. His Scottish coronation was performed while, as an infant, he slept on the throne of his fathers, and Knox preached his sermon to a baby who was not even making pretence to hear. His second coronation was performed with a celerity that had in it something of the comic, and, as soon as the last words were said, the new Monarch dashed off to hide himself in the country. But even here there was no rest, for the malady followed him wherever he went, and much confusion and annoyance was caused by the abrupt and uncertain migrations of the court.

This undignified dodging of the infection delayed the trial of the conspirators, but when, in November, they were eventually brought to trial, the verdict was "Guilty." The punishment was to be execution,

but James resolved to spring a surprise on his subjects and on the conspirators as well. The victims were brought, separately, to the scaffold, but each, just as he was about to place his head on the block, was told that the others were to be executed first. Each of the condemned men in turn, therefore, was locked up again, what time, as he supposed, his fellow conspirators were being beheaded. The final scene occurred when they all met together on the scaffold, each believing the others to be dead. While they gazed on one another, too astonished even to comment on the singular situation, the sheriff explained to them that the King had been graciously pleased to grant them their lives. Whether this quaint piece of stage-managing on the part of James was wisdom or buffoonery, the reader must judge for himself.

The religious state of the country was causing considerable uneasiness soon after James's accession. The official Church, the Elizabethan Establishment, was more or less settled and, furthermore, the new big fortunes, taken from the spoil of the old faith, were bound up in it. But there was a sufficiently strong Catholic element in the country to cause the officers of the State, and particularly Cecil, profound disquiet. The Catholic and traditional party was, moreover, united by common bond with Catholic Europe and much stronger in reality than its mere numbers indicated. But there was this added difficulty, that no one was quite sure who were the Catholics and who were not. That is to say, the gulf separating Catholics from Protestants was not, at the moment, considerable. Many who had been born and baptized as Catholics, and later converted to the new faith, showed a curious disposition to return to their first religion as age descended upon them. It was no extraordinary thing to find that a family was half Catholic and half Protestant, and not on bad terms with itself even then. The Milton family is a famous case in point, for whereas the poet was a stout Protestant, his brother was a life-long Catholic.

In a word, the old faith was not nearly so dead as the Established system suggested. It was not nearly so dead as those, whose fortunes were founded on its disruption, could have wished. The Catholics were, likewise, considered a menace to the new establishment, and reunion with Rome was the last thing that the dominant statesmen of the day desired. When James came to the throne the Catholics looked to him for some indulgence from the persecution that Elizabeth had conducted, and, for his part, he was inclined to grant it. He owed something to them for their sufferings in the cause of his own luckless mother. But his advisers were against the idea, solidly, almost to a man, and, above all, James dreaded giving them offence. They had made him and they could unmake him. The most the King could do was to invite Catholics to frequent the court and to promise to use his influence to shield them from the penalties of recusancy—so long as they were otherwise loyal, peaceful and deserving of his support.

The new body of Puritans, likewise, harassed James with petitions begging for religious toleration. They had even more reason to expect his good will, for the King had from childhood been educated in the Genevan principles. But James, as the Kingship of England came nearer his grasp, had learned to prefer the discipline of a church to the republicanism of the Kirk. The Church acknowledged the Sovereign as its head, but the Kirk chose to be independent of all sovereigns. When, therefore, James was in possession of the English crown, he did not hesitate to declare himself in favour of the hierarchy, as the firmest support of the throne. The bishops held office by right of the King, but the Puritan ministers held by right of God, and in practical politics it was more easy to influence the bishop than to influence God—or his ministers.

It was a right instinct that guided James against the Puritans, but if the Catholic was a diminishing sect, the Puritan was an increasing one, and as time went on the big landlords in Parliament tended to

join hands with the growing body, and to make with them, not only common cause against the Catholics, but also against the King. The Puritan body, at this stage, however, was able to force a conference on the King, presenting to him their four demands: Purity of doctrine, learning among the clergy, reformation in the ecclesiastical courts, and alteration of the Book of Common Prayer. The points were not conceded, but it would be an error to suppose that the conference was without result, since it was agreed at it, that a new translation of the Scriptures should be published. It is indeed to this conference and to the influence of James in it, that we owe the famous English translation of the Bible that was to influence the Church and the English character for at least two centuries, and that was to make a permanent addition to the literature of the country.

When James met his first Parliament, the true weakness of his position began to appear. The whole weakness of James was that he had been called to, and placed upon, the throne by the large magnates. They had put him in his present place and they did not fear him. In fact, because they had placed him there, they did not fear him. Unlike his son, Charles, he could not rebel against his powerful subjects. He could raise no standard, for there were none to rally round him. He was a foreigner and without adherents, and the same subjects who had crowned him had forced his mother to the scaffold. They voted him an income, the old "tonnage and poundage" that had been inadequate in Henry VIII's reign, and was now miserably unequal to the strain of royalty. He was, however, unable to obtain an additional supply of money—a deprivation that was to have far-reaching results to himself, but still more to his unfortunate son. The Lower House was composed of the men who had opposed Elizabeth, and, if they had not scrupled to oppose so powerful a person, they were not likely to fail to oppose James. They made it impossible for the King to carry any of the measures that he had

been fondly contemplating, and his credit was only saved by the Upper House, upon which he had so recently showered honours. But, upon one question, all were agreed, the necessity to persecute the Catholics. In spite of their demands for religious toleration, the fanaticism of the Puritans impelled them to persecute the "idolators" and fear of this large, but undetermined, body urged the two Houses to force an anti-Catholic policy on James. The oppressive laws of Elizabeth were not only confirmed to their fullest extent, but were even strengthened with additional severities. They accused James of a leaning towards popery, a ridiculous charge, for James had abhorred even his mother, on account of her religion. The accusation, however, had its effect, for the King hastened to secure himself against any further such charge. A proclamation was issued ordering the banishment of all Catholic missionaries, machinery was created for the discovery of recusants, and methods devised for dealing with them, and orders were given to the magistrates to bring the penal laws into immediate execution. The direct result of all this was the Gunpowder Plot of 1605.

The old fines were again levied on Catholics and considerable amounts obtained from them by that means. But a peculiarly severe method was now adopted of financially ruining them. For, since James had come to the throne, the sums of money due under the code of penal law had been allowed to fall in arrears and now the arrears and present fines were demanded in full. This meant that Catholics of modest incomes found themselves financially exhausted and often reduced to beggary. Moreover, the least failure to pay the fines demanded subjected the defaulters by law to the forfeiture of all their goods and two-thirds of their lands. Nor were the Catholics placated when it was known that the sums exacted in fines were allocated to relieve the clamours of the needy (or greedy) Scots, who followed the court. The sufferers complained that they were robbed and reduced to

extremities to support a crowd of foreigners whom they did not scruple to term "harpies." But all complaints were calmly ignored. James had discovered, almost by accident, a method of securing money, and it was at present all too profitable a method for him to renounce it. The Puritans, again, had discovered a method of persecution that gave them immediate satisfaction, and they were content. They were not purifying the religion of the country, but, at least, they were reducing the "idolators" to beggary. And to Cecil and the big Protestant lords, the spectacle of the feared, hated, and, in some sense, alien body within the state, being pushed to extremities, and harassed beyond endurance, was one to cause no distress, but rather relief.

Among the sufferers was one Robert Catesby, descended from an ancient and wealthy family in Northampton, but possessing property also in Warwickshire. In his earlier days Catesby had abandoned the old religion for the new. But as the years advanced, like so many more in England at the time, he was moved to return to Catholicism. With the coming of James he had shared the hope of others that the persecuting days of Elizabeth were over, and that a measure of toleration would, at length, be allowed in England. Events showed him the delusion under which he had laboured and his thoughts turned darkly towards revenge. The storm had burst upon Catholics with merciless force and it became his increasing purpose to obtain for his party relief from their burdens, by some means or other. Insurrection was not at the moment practicable and help from abroad was not to be expected. Catesby, therefore, hit upon a plan which needed neither numbers nor the aid of foreign powers. He formed the plan of blowing up the Parliament House with gunpowder, of bringing about a catastrophe that would involve the destruction of the King with the Lords and Commons; all, that is to say, who were instrumental in the framing of the penal laws against Catholics in England.

The deep and desperate design had the advantage that for its execution it would require few conspirators —in fact, the fewer the better. And though the plot was atrocious enough in all conscience, it is probable that Catesby obtained his original idea from recent historical events. The sacredness of the person of James I was not greater than that of his own mother, and yet James had not lifted his hand to save Mary Stuart from the block. By her death, Elizabeth and James had cheapened the lives of royal persons. But it was also true that James's father, the small-witted Darnley, had met his death by being blown up with gunpowder. As the father had been killed, so, too, might the son. In a word, the fact that the parents of the King had both chanced upon violent deaths was not without weight in suggesting the idea that their son might also be done to death violently ; and it is exceedingly probable that Catesby was thinking of the past while he was scheming the future.

Catesby communicated his plans to a friend, Thomas Winter, who was at first struck with horror at the design, but the former hastened to justify himself, reminding Winter of the present circumstances of Catholics throughout the kingdom. Unwillingly, Winter allowed himself to be drawn into the plot. At Ostend he met with Guy Fawkes.[1] Fawkes was a native of Yorkshire and a soldier of fortune. In the Netherlands he had held an important command, and he was renowned for his courage and fidelity. But what made him really valuable in the present contingency was that in this particular cause Fawkes was as mad, or at least as fanatical, as Catesby himself. Winter brought Fawkes back with him to England, but for some time the soldier of fortune remained ignorant of the full facts concerning the conspiracy. In the meantime, Catesby had been busy collecting useful men for his purpose. He had secured two safe men, Percy and Wright. Thomas

[1] It is worth noting that Fawkes spelt his name with the *u*, thus, Faukes.

Percy was a distant relation to the Earls of Northumberland. He had returned to the old religion about the same time as Catesby and his position made him a very valuable ally to the conspirators. John Wright was his brother-in-law and noted as the best swordsman of his time. He, too, had lately become a Catholic, and had been, on that account, harassed with persecution and imprisonment.

The conspirators were now five in number when, as if to prevent any efforts on their part to withdraw from the plot, fresh severities were ordered against Catholics. The members of that faith made a voluntary offer to the King to contribute a fixed yearly sum in place of the penalties payable by law. James, under the advice of his ministers, declined the offer. On the contrary, the judges were ordered to enforce the execution of the penal laws without delay, new methods were invented for the detection of secret Catholics and a number of priests were sent into exile for life. These things happened in rapid succession and the conspirators hardened their hearts. As their last hope of relief died within them, their own plan seemed the only remedy for the intolerable situation, and they hastened to put it into execution. They exhorted each other, like the Maccabees of old, to risk their lives for the liberation of their brethren. They began to move towards their great end. Enquiry showed that an empty house stood near to the old Palace of Westminster, and this house had a garden attached that seemed specially provided for their purpose. The vacant house was hired by Percy, for his office of gentleman pensioner frequently compelled him to reside near the Court, and the fact of his having a house near-by could arouse no suspicion whatsoever. On one side of the garden was an old building, standing against the wall of the Parliament House. Within this they commenced to lay their mine, allowing themselves sixteen hours a day for labour and the rest for repose, but arranging the work in such a way that while some rested the others con-

tinued the toil. The work was thus continuous, day and night. During the day, the work of excavation was carried on, but in the hours of darkness the rubbish that had been brought out of the ground was hidden away under the soil of the garden.

Four of the conspirators were thus employed, but the fifth, and he was Fawkes, giving himself out to be Percy's servant and going under the name of Johnson, kept a perpetual watch round the house. But while the mine was being prepared, it was learned that Parliament had suspended its sittings for the period of nearly nine months, and feeling that this long interval made the prospect of the excavation being discovered only too probable, there was a move to abandon the whole project. There were other difficulties, too. For the rising of water under the ground made it impossible to carry the mine beneath the foundations, and the task of piercing through a wall three yards thick and composed of great stones, was almost beyond the powers of men unaccustomed to manual labour and quite unskilled in their work. They were, however, still proceeding with patience, if with small results, when, one morning, they were alarmed by a strange noise that seemed to come from a room somewhere above their heads. On enquiry it was ascertained that the sound proceeded from a vaulted cellar that was situated under the house of Lords, and they learned that it would be unoccupied in a few days. The discovery led to the immediate abandoning of the mine. Fawkes was deputed to hire the cellar, when it should become vacant, but in the name of his supposed master. The conspirators now concentrated on the cellar, and under cover of night several barrels of gunpowder were brought to it, that had previously been concealed in a house in Lambeth. The barrels were hidden under stones, wood and articles of furniture, and their preparations being now complete, the conspirators separated, agreeing to meet again towards the end of September, not many days before the opening of Parliament.

Nothing in the state of the country was occurring to turn the plotters from their fell purpose. The persecution was daily increasing in severity. Nightly searches were made for priests. The prisons were full of Catholics and both missionaries and laymen were being put to death for religious crimes. The courts were held every six weeks to take information, and to sentence offenders. Catholics of the middle classes who did not conceal their religion were being ground to the dust, while even the higher ranks were being reduced, little by little, to a state of complete poverty. And, to add to the general terror, a report got abroad that at the next Parliament measures were to be brought forward that should virtually extinguish the practice of the old religion in England.

The time that the Gunpowder plotters were taking to bring their plot to a head was already telling against the success of the conspiracy. To have been successful, it should have been sudden. Catesby and Fawkes were indefatigable in their efforts to carry out their design, but their mysterious ways were beginning to excite suspicion. The other plotters were only held together by the fanaticism of the two chief members. Catesby was already suspicious of the loyalty of his followers and hated to have them separated from his immediate influence. It happened, too, that the provincial of the Jesuits in England, Garnet, received in confession some hazy information of the conspiracy and he made use of the news to try to reason with Catesby, as to the necessity of submitting to the weight of the persecution and of leaving justice to the mercy of Heaven. He would not hear the details of the plot, but contrived a delay, while he sent a messenger to Rome to acquaint the authorities there with the condition of the Catholics in England. Garnet was persuaded that such a delay would prove fatal to the design of the conspirators, and he expected, ultimately, to receive from the Pope a letter prohibiting all violent protests against constituted authority. But, in the meantime, a delay of another

sort was imposed, for the Parliament was prorogued from October to the fifth of November.

This last postponement was disastrous to the enterprise. The conspirators grew alarmed, thinking that their plot had been discovered. They endeavoured to confirm their suspicions and failed therein. Nevertheless, they were correct in their impression. Cecil had already got wind of their dark proceedings.

Persuading themselves, as best they might, that the authorities remained in ignorance of their plot, the conspirators began to arrange their final plans. But, by now, they were plunged into financial difficulties. None but Catesby was rich, and he had been sustaining his fellow plotters for the last twelve months. All the movements had been at his expense, all the purchases made with his money. Now he was at the end of his resources and it was necessary for the success of his arrangements that he should have a large sum at his disposal, on the day of the explosion. He approached two Catholic gentlemen of standing, therefore, with a view to consolidating the financial side of the plot. Sir Everard Digby was the first whom he sounded, a young man who had been brought up in the Protestant faith, but who had now returned to the older religion. It was with difficulty that he could be brought into the matter at all, but Catesby had a persuasive manner, and eventually he induced Digby to promise the sum of one thousand and a half pounds towards the expenses of the conspiracy. The second gentleman upon whom Catesby called was Francis Tresham, who held large property in Northamptonshire. Tresham was by no means enthusiastic. He was cold and reserved by nature, and nothing Catesby could urge served to excite him. He was, moreover, not noted for his fidelity, but the extremities of the chief conspirator left him no choice. He received a sort of promise of £2,000 from Tresham, but retired greatly doubting the sincerity of the latest conspirator.

The final arrangements of the plot were as follow :

All the Peers and Commons whom it was deemed

advisable to save, either on account of their religion, or because of their lack of hostility to Catholics, should they be in London, were to receive an urgent message on the morning of the opening of Parliament, which should, at least, take them from Westminster at the time that the blow was struck.

The task of firing the mine was allotted to Guy Fawkes. Immediately after he had fired it, he was to fly to Flanders, and a ship was provided for that purpose.

Percy, who had access to the palace, was to enter and obtain possession of the young Prince Charles, and Catesby was to proclaim the heir-apparent at Charing Cross. It was also agreed that a Protector should be appointed to represent the royal authority, during the prince's minority, but if any special person was named for this singular honour, the name has not come down to us.

While he was planning these wild and visionary things at a house near Enfield, Catesby received a surprise visit from the doubtful Tresham. Tresham appeared embarrassed and ill at ease; so much so, indeed, that he alarmed Catesby and his friends. He asked with a great deal of anxiety that a warning of his danger should be passed to Lord Mounteagle, who was related to him through the marriage of his sister. It was a natural request, but asked in so unnatural a manner that it confirmed the suspicions hitherto held about Tresham. Still, it was a request that could not, in the circumstances, be refused, and permission was given for the warning to be sent. Tresham then asked that the explosion should be timed to take place at the closing of Parliament rather than at its opening, and they deceived him, pretending to grant his request.

How far Tresham was really deceived, it is impossible to say, but it is probable that he was not deceived at all. The next thing that happened was that Lord Mounteagle received a very mysterious letter in very mysterious circumstances, warning him not to go to

the opening of Parliament, where there was to be a "terribel blowe." This letter was at once sent to Cecil, who had it placed before the King, when he returned to London. The King spent many hours over the sinister document in company with his ministers. The news reached the conspirators, who now knew not whether to fly or to wait, but still continued hoping against hope. They were convinced that an understanding existed between Lord Mounteagle and Tresham, and yet Tresham swore his innocence so loudly and with so many oaths that they hesitated between belief and disbelief. But the fact that no search had been made in the cellar gave them fresh courage and they determined not to forfeit all their work for what might be, after all, but a conjecture. They decided to carry the thing through, and Fawkes undertook to keep guard inside the cellar. It was, in fact, the deeper cunning of Cecil that caused the cellar not to be searched. He wanted to give the conspirators sufficient rope.

On the evening of the 4th of November the lonely figure of Fawkes was left in the cellar with the concealed gunpowder, while his fellow conspirators rode off to their appointed places. The cellar was visited by the Lord Chamberlain, whose duty it was to see that all was prepared for the opening of the Parliament, but in his company was Lord Mounteagle. They cast round, apparently, careless glances, observing to Fawkes, or Johnson, as he had named himself, that his master (i.e. Percy) had laid in an abundant stock of fuel. If a warning was contained in these words, it was not taken by the guardian of the gunpowder, and Fawkes remained at his post. He was determined, however, at the first approach of danger to fire his mine and perish, if possible in the company of his enemies. A little after midnight, that is, on the 5th of November, the day for the session to open, Fawkes opened the door of the vault. There was a sudden movement without, a swift rush of men, and he found himself seized by a party of soldiers. When

they took him it was seen that Fawkes was dressed for a journey. He was discovered to have matches in his possession, while in a corner of the vault they found a dark lantern, with a flame burning within. The vault was carefully searched and the barrels of gunpowder brought to light, under the fuel. Fawkes was hurried off to be interrogated and the conspiracy, deeply planned and over so long a period, was at an end. Fawkes went to the Tower, and to his death. Catesby and Percy were mortally wounded in a fight to avoid capture. Of the rest, nearly all were taken, but many also were captured, tried and executed who had nothing to do with the plot and no connection with the conspirators. The Jesuit, Gerard, was with these last, though his crime seems to consist in an earnest effort to stifle the conspiracy, rather than in an endeavour to encourage it.

The significance of the Gunpowder Plot has not been thoroughly realized by the official historians in this country. The attempt to "blow the Scottish beggars back to their native mountains," has been seen only in part and not in true outline. The importance of the Plot lay, not in the fact that it endangered the life of King James (which it never did), but in the use that Cecil made of the frustrated scheme. The Plot has been outlined at some length in these pages because it marks a turning point in the history of this country. At any time after Henry VIII's reign to 1605, England might, without violence, have reverted to the Catholic religion; at any time after that date such a change was inconceivable. The whole position turns on the weight and influence of the big fortunes that were now hedging in the Crown. These fortunes were founded on the property of the old Church, and their owners never felt entirely safe while remnants of the old religion lingered. The magnates feared the possibility of the Catholics rearising in England. They feared the formation of a strong Catholic party in the state. It would, perhaps, be an exaggeration to say that the great lords feared

a new Catholic fashion, and yet it is obvious that fashion played a great part in the present reaction. The pendulum had swung more than once already. In Edward VI's reign the swing had been towards strict Protestantism. In the following reign (Mary's) it had been towards Catholicism. In Elizabeth's, after a slight initial hesitation, the reaction had been again to Protestantism, and in the reign of James it might very well have been once more to Catholicism. Already an uncomfortable number of persons was turning towards Catholic views, and Catholic ways of thinking. Most of the conspirators in the essentially futile and silly plot we have just been following in some detail, it will have been noticed, were men who had started out as Protestants and ended as Catholics. It was a process that was going on all over the country and yet something that was not being worked consciously. But perhaps still more important was the undoubted fact that the persecution of Catholics was already being frowned upon by Englishmen generally. The severities that had marked Elizabeth's reign (with a black mark) had found small sympathy in the hearts of the people. Englishmen at large felt none of that abhorrence for their Catholic countrymen that the government felt. And, as it has been hinted earlier, the gulf separating the Catholic from the non-Catholic was, at the moment, by no means unbridgeable. Englishmen were able to pass over from one side to the other with a certain amount of ease. Of late the tendency had been to pass over from the Protestant side to the Catholic; which was not at all what the government required. There was a far finer sense of toleration in religious England than Cecil or the Council could view with equanimity. It did not suit the new lords at all to see a growing Catholic body; hence the rigour with which the persecutions were again revived after the death of Elizabeth.

But the Gunpowder Plot was the Cecils' great opportunity. The Plot was organized by a few, inferior men, two of whom were, probably, not sane,

and it was persisted in against the advice of the Catholic authorities. The plotters did not number in their ranks any of the great Catholic lords or the big Catholic families. The Plot, indeed, had no real religious significance. It was the work of a tiny circle and that circle represented nothing—not even themselves. The whole thing was just "bunk." If we search for a rough parallel in our own day we might find one, let us say, in a supposed plot of the Communists, or even of a sub-section of the Communist Party (the Hundred-per-Cent. Leninites, for instance) to blow up the King. It would be false to blame the whole body of Communists for such a plot, even if it were unsuccessful, but still less reasonable would it be to attach the blame to the entire Labour Party. Still more blameworthy would a government be if it had known of the plot, at an early state of its gradual development, and carefully nursed it until the dramatic moment arrived when it could be uncovered and announced to the world in a blaze of publicity.

Yet that is substantially what happened in the case of the Gunpowder Plot. At what stage Cecil first heard of it, it is now difficult to determine. He certainly received early news from abroad of what was going on. Rumours came over from Flanders with Guy Fawkes. Cecil watched in the dark while the conspirators entangled themselves in the web of their own spinning, and only on the day of the opening of Parliament did he move to make his spectacular arrest. But it was upon the use he made of this stupid plot that the history of England, but especially the tragedy of the Stuarts in England, turned. Far-reaching were the results that flowed from the general denunciation of Catholics that followed the stifling of the Plot. The conspiracy was used as propaganda against the old religion. The design to blow up the King and his Parliament was obviously atrocious. It was an infamous piece of knavery, to be condemned by all right-minded men. It was an outrage that put its perpetrators outside the

pale of civilization, declared them unworthy to bear the right of citizenship and, in fact, debarred them from the right of movement among, or intercourse with, their fellows. But it was only the plotters who were thus condemned, only the insignificant circle that revolved round Catesby, that was so branded. It was another matter, altogether, when these terms of disapprobation and disgust were hurled at Catholics generally, at all Catholics, and the party saddled with the misdoings of the wretched conspirators.

What Cecil and his adherents did was to work a publicity "stunt"[1] against the Catholics. It was declared to be not a Catesby, but a Catholic, plot. Catholics, it was roundly asserted, were not only capable of such things, but considered it a religious and conscientious duty so to act, in order to achieve their ends. It was actually held to be a part of their faith to overturn constituted authority. Catholics, therefore, were the sinners. *They* were the infamous knaves, condemned by all right-minded men. *They* were the perpetrators of the outrage, that placed them outside the pale. *They* were the plotters, unworthy of citizenship. In short, they were not to be trusted inside the realm. The faith that would sanction, if not encourage, such atrocious action on the part of its members was not to be tolerated in the land. The Catholics were condemned by their own actions. They had been unmasked, while yet at their secret plottings. What, then, were their deserts? Persecution, and yet again persecution, until the hideous thing, this plague among men, had been unearthed to the very last root, and cast out of the kingdom. *Catholici ad leones.*

Thus was the business managed. The nation was made to look upon the Catholics as a godless, lawless lot, who could be allowed to survive only at the peril of the rest of the community. The new rich lords, be it remembered, not only controlled the power of the purse, but also the power of the press. The press was

[1] The word is unfortunate, but it well satisfies the general meaning.

a new weapon in their hands. It had already been tested, but its full value in the matter of propaganda was not realized, before Cecil came into power and demonstrated the fact. Pulpits, Parliament, purse and printing-press, they were all turned at full blast against the unfortunate holders of the old religious beliefs, and each was made use of to the utmost extent. How just, wise and necessary had been the system of persecution under Elizabeth, was declared with increasing vigour. A new and bitter war sprang up against Catholics, fanned into a flame in one night, which, carried on with ruthless persistence, stopped the reaction towards Catholicism and reversed the process. The bridge was broken between Protestant and Catholic, the gulf between them widened beyond all crossing. A movement was now started that did not end until a century was passed. It was a movement that was eminently successful. At the end of that period, the Catholic Church in England was stamped out. By that time the Catholic element in the nation had been reduced to not more than one per cent. of the total population, of no political significance whatsoever, of no consequence one way or the other. For good or for evil, Catholics had disappeared and the work, begun by Henry VIII, was at length complete.

One effect that the war on Catholics had was to increase the size and importance of the Puritanical party. The movement against Catholics upset the balance in England, and the tendency now turned towards the Puritan extreme. It is significant, for it was the great Puritan leader (he was also a very big landowner, it is true) who eventually destroyed the Stuarts.

The deaths and executions of those, directly or indirectly, guilty of the Gunpowder Plot was only the first step in the great new campaign. A fresh penal code was devised. In the House of Parliament each member was ordered to stand up in his place and state what measures, in his judgment, were expedient to deal with the Catholic menace. Through a series

of conferences these measures were passed by one House to the other. After a lengthy succession of debates and conferences, the new code was ready for the royal assent. That assent was not withheld. None of the laws in force against Catholics was, of course, repealed, but their severity was enormously added to by two new Bills containing more than seventy articles inflicting penalties on Catholics in every walk of life. A new oath of allegiance was, moreover, enacted, which had the purpose of drawing a distinction between those Catholics who allowed, and those who denied, the temporal pretension of the Pope. The intention was to drive a wedge into the Catholic party, which should divide it into two portions, and it was hoped that each party would then be opposed to the other. It succeeded in its attempt and the now dwindling Catholic body in England was, for a long time, divided on this question of taking the new oath.

It is perhaps a sign of the success of the Cecil policy, and of the thoroughness with which it turned the minds of his countrymen against Catholics, that even to this day effigies, deriving their name from Guy Fawkes, are still burned publicly on the fifth of November.

As the years rolled on two points became increasingly clear about King James: (1) that he was occupying no place in the hearts of his subjects, who continued to regard him without esteem, and (2) that he was rapidly falling into debt. As regards the person of the King, Englishmen simply did not take to him. There was nothing in him to win popular affection. Even the fact that he had not been caught by the Gunpowder plotters failed to turn the public good-will in his direction. Neither by speech nor proclamation could he gain attention or respect, while, on the other hand, his dislike of business and his love of dissipation, drew abuse to him from all sides. The truth is that his Calvinistic upbringing had crushed his youth, and his impoverished years as King of Scotland had

crushed his early manhood. When he came to the English throne he expected that he had, at last, come into riches. It was his belief that it was the duty of his ministers to provide him with money, and that his own duty lay in spending it. Throwing off the shackles of Calvin, he now attempted in his age to recover some of the joys that he had lost in his youth. In his age, he aped the follies of youth. Like all the Stuarts, he was fond of the chase, and after a day in the saddle he would relieve his fatigue with the pleasures of the table. He indulged himself to excess. Indeed indulgence to excess was the order of the court at that time. His consort, Anne of Denmark, had small respect for the King. She had considerable contempt for his lack of kingly spirit. She saw him governed by his own ministers and thought his peaceful disposition under the treatment a mere insult added to royal injury. Yet she held herself aloof from political intrigue, giving her attention to the amusements and pleasures of the court. To display her personal advantages and to shine, the first among her ladies, in the balls and masks were her principal occupations. No expense was spared to give splendour to her entertainments. The best available was always procured, and the centre of every scene was Anne, with her favourite attendants, each time in new and costly setting. Sobriety was not a mark of the time and it was customary for the revellers, fair and otherwise, at the presentation of a new mask or scene, to be unable to do justice to the parts assigned them on account of the unbalancing effect of intoxication. An amusing letter written by a guest at one such entertainment is not without interest. After describing in amusing detail the unsteady conduct of some of the chief players, he continues : " Now did appear in rich dress Hope, Faith and Charity. Hope did assay to speak, but wine did render her endeavours so feeble that she withdrew. Faith was then all alone, for I am certain she was not joyned with good works, and left the court in a staggering condition. Charity

came to the King's feet, and seemed to cover the multitude of sins her sisters had committed, in some sort she made obeysance and brought gifts. She then returned to Hope and Faith, who were both sick . . . in the lower hall."

In this fashion lived the King and Queen, piling up debts that they were unable to meet, while Cecil and the Council carried on the government of England, and the idea of a personal ruler, for the first time for many centuries, began to lose its grip on the Englishman's mind.

Meanwhile, the importance of Cecil increased by leaps and bounds. The old nobility no longer hoped to force him from his position at the head of the Council and, therefore, of the State. They found it wiser and more convenient to make common cause with him and to pull the same way. The rising Aristocracy became more conscious and less likely to quarrel among itself. During these years it was consolidating, and before long it was to make itself the master of England. And the mark of this new power was the steady advance of Cecil. The dissipation of the King and his debts transferred to him and his, the government of the kingdom. And as they governed Cecil rose in power. He became Viscount Cranbourne, and soon after, Earl of Salisbury. He was master of of the Court of Wards, the most lucrative office possessed by any subject in Christendom. He became Lord High Treasurer. . . .

Cecil was the man whom the King consulted on all questions of importance. He led the King this way or the other. He allowed James to slide into debt, to tie himself up with the ropes cast him by the new financiers. In Scotland James had lived in poverty, and, moreover, was the pensioner of Elizabeth's government. When he was called to England he believed himself in possession of wealth that no spending could exhaust. His household and the residence of his Queen and children were run on the most expensive lines, and at his numerous entertainments

expenses were never spared. Cecil watched and waited while the Treasury was being drained. He saw the King attempting to raise forced loans, and failing. He saw the royal party reduced to poverty, even to the point where purveyors refused provisions for the King's table, until they had been paid for the past. He heard the inferior officers of the court clamouring for their arrears of salaries. He saw, in fact, the point reached beyond which the King could no longer carry on, and then, when James was bound hand and foot by his own debts, did Cecil step in and take command. He took control of the King's finances when James's debts amounted to thirteen hundred thousand pounds. He took control of the King's expenditure, and from this time onwards he and his kind never lost their hold over the King. James was wise enough not to struggle, but to submit. He took the income they gave him, and made the most of it. His son was of a different disposition. Charles kicked, but James merely grumbled. The great debt was reduced as the years passed, but never paid off. Even its reduction still further constricted the powers of the King, for several large sums were raised by the sale of lands belonging to the Crown. Crown revenue was thus further cut down, and the power of the monarchy infringed.

While all power was slowly being drawn from the Scotchman on the English throne, and while he was afraid to make any pretence of asserting the Divine Right that he claimed, his attention was much occupied by events within his own family circle. The person who thus claimed his attention was his cousin-german Arabella Stuart. She was descended, as was James, from Margaret Tudor, the eldest daughter of Henry VII, and on this account the King had been sometimes disposed to look upon her as a rival. He was fully aware of his own unpopularity and lack of supporters and a suspicion haunted his mind that the claims of Arabella might prove dangerous at some future date to his own line. Moreover, the unsettling

events in Scotland at the time of his birth and during his youth had taught him to fear, when another would have fought. His treatment of Arabella had been kindly. She was regarded as his kinswoman and granted a pension, while apartments were allotted to her at the palace. Nevertheless, James was determined that she should never marry. She had been acquainted since childhood with William Seymour, son of Lord Beauchamp. Their acquaintance deepened as they grew up. At length they were no longer acquaintances, but lovers, and, in due course, an officious courtier brought the news that Seymour had proposed marriage to Arabella. A sort of terror seized the King. Even Seymour himself was not without claims to the crown. He too was descended from Henry VII through Mary, the sister of Margaret Tudor. James saw his own line menaced by the suggested union. He acted at once. The lovers were summoned before the Council, abused for their presumption, and forbidden to marry without the royal assent. They pretended to submit to the ruling of James, but soon after were secretly married. The news was not long in finding its way to the King's ears. He exercised his authority without scruple. Seymour was sent to the Tower and Arabella given over to the custody of Sir Thomas Parry at Lambeth. Still the lovers were not effectually separated, for through the negligence, or with the help, of the warders they contrived several interviews. They were again separated, but this time each managed to escape. James was now thoroughly alarmed and convinced that a deep and wide-set plot was organized against himself, to place the pair on the throne of England, and when Arabella was recaptured she was sent to the Tower, which was placed under a special guard. Her confinement there was severe, more especially so as the King had been unable to get hold of her husband. Indeed, Arabella yielded to despair and it was not long before her mind gave way under the stress of her treatment and her disappointed hope. In the

fourth year of her imprisonment, she died, nor did her death add greatly to James's popularity; it being held that she was the victim of a heartless policy and that to the King she had been but an imaginary menace. The timidity of James had, in fact, deprived a relation of both liberty and life. She was buried privately at Westminster by night, in the same vault to which the remains of the luckless Queen of Scots (James's mother) had been removed. It was a queer twist of fate that thus brought these two ladies of the royal house of Stuart together. Each had been fetched from imprisonment to the grave; each had died because it was feared that they had a claim to the English crown, and, in each case, James had been concerned in the death.

In 1612 Cecil died, but his work was done. A compact body of large magnates now stood round the King, keeping their hold upon him by keeping him in debt on the one hand, and insufficiently provided as to income, on the other. Though Cecil was dead, the Cecil policy remained. The King still ran in harness, nor did he ever find the courage to bolt. As James's reign continued, the King loomed less and less important in the realm. In the end he was almost taken for granted, and, but for the negotiations before his death, first with Spain, but secondly with France, to secure a wealthy wife for his son Charles, he might have dropped out of English life abruptly and for ever, and most would scarcely have noticed his passing.

In was in 1612 that Charles became heir to the throne. When James made his descent upon England he had brought with him his elder son, Henry, leaving the sickly Charles behind him in Scotland. But it was the healthy son who died and the sickly one that lived on. Even while James was pursuing Arabella, he was negotiating marriages for his son Henry. The heir-apparent had reached his eighteenth year and, apart from other reasons, James fancied that he could make profit for himself out of a good marriage for his son. There was little affection between father

and son. For one thing, James was jealous of the lad, and, for another, Henry had learned (probably from his mother) to look with scorn upon a father who had so little kingly spirit and who gave up his time so freely to pleasure. He boasted openly how differently he should direct affairs when he came to the throne. His hero was King Henry V, and he dreamed again that old dream of kings since the Conquest, of making France and England one nation. Those who disliked, or were discontented with, the father praised the virtues and abilities of the son with emphasis ; hence James's jealousy.

But all the hopes that the discontented people saw in the son, and all the promises that James made with himself, were unfulfilled and set at naught by the hand of death. The young Prince was obstinate enough to take his own advice on matters of health, and like many who are thus obstinate he came by an early death. Thus, unexpectedly, did Baby Charles (as his father persisted in calling him) become heir to the throne. It is of course impossible to say what would have happened if Henry had lived to receive the Crown. Each discontented party mourned him as a lost champion. But whether he would have been any party's champion, or even his own, is an interesting point. Would he, in the name of the Crown, have challenged the big parliamentary lords, as did his brother, thirty years later, or would he, ultimately, have followed in his father's steps, keeping the appearance of kingship, but not the power ? In the second case the House of Stuart might not have been doomed, and their tragedy would have been of another sort.

The rest of James's reign, except for the matrimonial arrangements on behalf of his heir, was unimportant, especially to James. He had by now got well into the groove in which it was intended that he should move. His ministers would listen to him, often with respect, and then go and do what they had planned to do. They encouraged him in those

theological disputes in which he was persuaded that he excelled, for in that way he could be kept from troubling them in the government of England and Scotland. And after each bout with the divines, James would return to the festive board to toast himself as victor. But James was not taken seriously, except by James, and the respect of his ministers was often lacking. There were times when he was left alone, a lonely, pompous, pathetic, old gentleman, ever fearful of some dark plot against himself, ever distrustful of those whom he had expected to serve him. And it is possible that what kept him at the feast and helped him to raise all too frequently the glass to his lips, was the terrific and overwhelming sense of disappointment at the realities of the royal state. In his loneliness he must have told himself bitterly, that having entered the Promised Land, in this maddening fashion were his promises fulfilled. In his age he attempted to soothe himself with favourites. Anne of Denmark did little to soothe him. Thomas Robert Carr, the son of one who had suffered much in the cause of the unfortunate Mary Stuart, became a favourite of the King's. For a while James paraded him in the limelight, but nothing could be made of a nobody, and Carr sank back into the gloom. He is only remembered nowadays for his connection with the famous "Overbury Mystery," that is still a mystery after three centuries. Thus, also, George Villiers steps on to the Stuart stage, but "Steenie" (as the King, who liked nicknames as much as did Dr. Johnson, insisted on calling him) was to do a great deal of harm before he too sunk into the background, through the agency of the assassin. George Villiers, the courtier, tall, well-proportioned, quick of wit and out for advancement, rose rapidly to eminence. Using the old King with praise and flattery, it was found that he was the Duke of Buckingham before most people realized that he was George Villiers. He was the friend of Charles, the King's son, and we shall hear more of that unfortunate friendship on a later page.

On leaving Scotland, James had promised his countrymen to visit them once every two years. It was fourteen years before he did visit them, nor did they see him again. He had originally hoped for a perfect union between England and Scotland, with one Church and one law, but both countries were so utterly opposed to such a measure that, like most of James's plans, it was given up. There was little love for James in Scotland. The republican ideals, that had been established in the Kirk by Knox and his disciples, were repugnant to the English Council. The Scottish Church must be ruled through bishops, if the English Council was to control it. To induce the leaders of the Kirk to accept the authority of bishops, the property of the Catholics was placed at their disposal. But even this did not cancel religious war in Scotland. The property of the Catholics was, by this time, far from large. In 1616 James held a session of Parliament in Edinburgh. He was, however, unsuccessful in his attempt to alter the drift of affairs in Scotland and soon returned to England.

And so the reign dragged on. Trouble in Ireland was met by confiscation and plantation. Almost the whole of the six northern counties were taken over, and thickly planted with Scotchmen. It was an improvement on the Elizabethan scheme of colonization, and laid up more trouble for the future than any planter could have deemed possible. And, all the while, the relentless war against Catholics in England was continued successfully. The prisons were crowded with priests and with those who would not take the oath, or who were committed for non-attendance at the established Church. In 1619, again, the gallant but unprincipled adventurer, Sir Walter Raleigh, sailed on his last and least successful voyage. After a number of discreditable episodes, he returned to face those whom his former accounts had filled with confidence. His journey had been a disastrous failure, after he had promised so much, and he ended his life, cheerfully enough, on the scaffold. Yet again,

the impeachment of Francis Bacon, Lord Verulam, caused a pleasant sensation. Bacon was a man of letters, or rather a master of letters, whose ambition was power and wealth. There were really two Francis Bacons, one a scholar and artist, and the other, the Lord Chancellor of England. The scholar's principles were as lofty as one could desire, but the Lord Chancellor was a vain, crafty and extravagant fellow, who made a speciality in bribery and corruption. The curiosity is that almost the whole of the sins of the Lord Chancellor were denounced and corrected by Bacon, the scholar. But it was the Lord Chancellor, at last, who was charged with his offences and brought to trial. He shrank from his accusers and took to his bed. He was fined the immense sum of £40,000, and exiled from court for ever. Then began a battle between the scholar and the lawyer, or rather, politician. The scholar revised his works and wrote some history, while the politician ceaselessly harassed the King, the prince, anybody in power, for pardon, pension or employment. This extraordinary combat lasted for nearly five years, at the end of which the politician died of disappointment and disgrace. The scholar lived on; indeed he is still living.[1]

Towards the end of his life James busied himself in securing a suitable wife for his son, Charles. He was anxious to ally himself with a powerful European state for the usual reasons, but, also, because he knew himself to be held in contempt by Europe in general, on account of his feeble character, or, as he would have put it, his peaceful disposition. He centred his hopes on the Infanta of Spain, Donna Maria, under the impression that the riches of her father would

[1] As a man, Bacon was entirely devoid of humour. That was his general defect. Humour might have saved him from his fall, but assuredly it would have saved him from the shock of disappointed ambition, that killed him after his fall from grace. It is this absence of a sense of humour (that James also shared) that makes it so amazing that anyone should imagine that Bacon wrote Shakespeare's plays.

supply a large portion with the Princess, and the impoverished English throne be assisted thereby. The superior power of the Spanish monarch, both by land and by sea, would render him a valuable ally. The match was eagerly seconded by the Spanish Ambassador in England, Gondomar, and by the English Ambassador in Spain, Digby. An attempt was made to get over the chief difficulty, the difference of religious belief between Charles and the Infanta. The Princess was to be left free to practise the Catholic form of worship in England and, moreover, James was induced to promise that he would never more allow Catholic priests to be executed for the exercise of their religious functions, and that he would render to Catholic recusants every indulgence in his power. The negotiations were lengthy, for the Spanish Cabinet never moved with haste, and it had now to consider something that might very well be discussed at length. But, on account of the lengthiness of the arrangements, something of the secret escaped, and the zealous Protestant party in England began to assert that the restoration of Popery was at hand, and religion, therefore, in danger. Still, the slow negotiations seemed to be progressing towards the desired end. The English King had been persuaded to promise that the English Catholics should no longer suffer persecution or restraint, the dowry of the princess had been agreed upon (it was fixed at two million ducats), and a dispensation for the marriage had been applied for, when that happened which upset the whole business.

It was at this moment that two strangers, calling themselves John and Thomas Smith, arrived one evening at the English Ambassador's residence at Madrid. Their real names were Charles, Prince of Wales, and Villiers, Duke of Buckingham.[1] They had left England without anyone but the King knowing of their going, and had travelled in disguise to Spain. It was a romantic project that might

[1] Actually Villiers was Marquis of Buckingham. He was raised to the Dukedom after his arrival in Spain.

appeal to any Stuart, and this strange journey of Charles was not entirely unlike his own father's celebrated dash to Norway, in quest of the Princess, Anne, so many years before. At first it seemed that the journey had justified its being undertaken. The King, the nobility and the populace of Madrid went wild with enthusiasm over the unexpected appearance of the English Prince. They were at a loss to know how to testify their joy. The prisons were thrown open, the Prince was made to take precedence of the Spanish King himself, and Charles was presented with two golden keys, giving him admission to the royal apartments at all times. His visit was not only considered a proof of his attachment to the Spanish Princess, but also as a prelude to his conversion to Catholicism.

There were, however, two factors fatal to this enterprise. The first was the alarm and indignant surprise of those in England who mattered, when they learned the meaning of the disappearance of the Prince and Buckingham. But the second and more important factor that upset the project was the personality of Buckingham. Buckingham was vain and conceited, his new honours having risen to his head like new wine. He had that cunning of the small man that endeavours to ruin the work of greater men, rather than appear to have no determining voice in bringing the matter to a decision. Moreover, his manner of living and the publicity of his amours were shocking to Spanish tastes. Buckingham had great influence not only over Charles, but also over his father, James. Having, in the present case, led the Prince deeply into the matter of marriage with the Infanta, beyond which there was no honourable retreat, he now began a series of discreditable moves, in order to bring the whole business to naught. The consequence was that he left Spain in haste and dishonour, but the character of Charles had also been trampled in the dust. The Spanish match was at an end, but the matter of its ending brought about a war between England and

Spain, much to the horror of the peace-loving James.

Pecuniary aid, then, was not to be obtained from Spain. James, who had almost touched the Spanish ducats, felt their loss bitterly and it speaks well for his heart, but ill for his head that he could yet receive the intriguing Buckingham as a favourite. In truth, age was coming upon him rapidly and the result of too much indulgence at the feast was making itself felt. He had never been too strong in the intellect, and in the case of Buckingham and his son, Charles, he did not even trouble to use his weak mind. At an earlier stage in his career he would have realized that the best way to secure the Spanish ducats would have been to refrain from sending Buckingham to Spain with his son. But, it may also be asked, what was the meaning of the concessions he had been willing to make in the case of the Catholics, so long as the marriage with the Infanta was carried through? The Spanish match could only be made on condition that the loads were lifted from the shoulders of English Catholics. Only on that condition, that is, would the ducats be paid over. But James well knew that he had no power in England to free Catholics from the penal laws. The ducats would make him independent, as far as income was concerned, but by no means independent as far as the law was concerned. In short, if he carried out his promises to the Spanish King, he would find himself in opposition to his own people, who could unthrone him as easily as they had enthroned him; and if he broke his promises, he would find himself at war with the greatest military power in Europe. The fact is that James was getting very old and feeble indeed.

But if the ducats were not to come from Spain, where were they to come from? Not from Parliament; not, indeed, from England. James had exhausted his chances at home. He had gone over the whole ground. Monopolies and patents had been sold, past the selling of them. Timber had been cut down and baronets had been created (at £1,000 apiece).

Nothing remained for him to touch. In England, in few words, there was nothing doing. The big fortunes would not help. A solution to the difficulty was found by Charles himself, but before the solution could be applied, King James was dead. He never received that last pecuniary relief, upon which his hope was so fixed.

It happened that when Charles and Buckingham (or the two Smiths) were passing through France on their secret journey to Spain, they stopped for a day in Paris. They had been admitted as strangers to the French Court—for even strangers could thus easily reach royalty in those democratic days—where, at a ball, they were privileged to see the Princess, Henrietta Maria. The youngest daughter of the late King, she was in her fourteenth year, dark of complexion and small of stature, yet distinguished for her beauty and her elegant form. She did not deeply impress Charles at the time, but, with the failure of the Spanish opportunity, his thoughts wandered back to Henrietta. The question of union between the two was formally opened when the English Court was fully extracted from the tangle of the Spanish affair. From the French point of view, the proposed match was considered suitable and a treaty was drawn up. It was agreed that the parties should be married in France, and that in England, the contract should be publicly ratified, without a religious ceremony. The Princess was to be allowed the same freedom in the exercise of her religion as had been agreed upon in the case of the Infanta, and any children of the union were to remain under the Princess's care, until they had reached their thirteenth years. On the all-important question of the dowry, a sum of eight hundred thousand crowns was agreed upon. When it came to the question of indulgence to English Catholics, Cardinal Richelieu interfered to some purpose. It was a very difficult matter and one upon which the negotiations very nearly broke down for, since the alarm of the Spanish project,

James had promised his Parliament that the Catholics in England should be persecuted as vigorously as ever. Eventually a secret arrangement was come to, which allowed that all Catholics imprisoned for religion should be discharged; that fines levied on recusants should be repaid and that, in future, they should suffer no violence on account of the private and peaceful practice of their faith.

It is difficult to believe that James intended to carry out these provisions in favour of the Catholics, or that he could have felt that he had power so to do. His only idea seems to have been to surmount his obstacles in *some* manner, and not to encounter again a disgrace, such as he had experienced in Spain. With the difficulties of the future he may have thought that he would not be called upon to deal, but he was certainly passing them on to his son. Yet a further hitch occurred before the dispensation was formally delivered, for the Pope (Urban VIII) desired better security for the performance of the promises in favour of the Catholics. But even after the dispensation had been delivered, one last obstacle stood between James and the possession of his son's wife's dowry. For when all was at length ready, the English King died. He died before the marriage was celebrated, though a proxy had been appointed by Charles, and the Duke of Buckingham had been ordered to conduct the royal bride to England.

James fell suddenly ill. At first it was thought that he was suffering from ague, but later, from gout in the stomach. But whatever the disease, he obstinately refused medicine, fearing to the end that an attempt was being made to take his life. And, whatever might have been his timidity in life, he ultimately faced death with a serene mind. At the hour of death he seemed, at last, to find that Stuart courage which ennobled that tragic line. He looked death stoutly in the face, to the surprise of many. On the fourteenth day after the beginning of his illness, knowing now that his fate was sealed, he sent

for his son Charles, but before the Prince could reach his father, the old King had lost the power of speech, and, a very few hours later, the first of the Scottish Kings to sit on the throne of England expired, peacefully enough. He had reigned in England for twenty-three years and was now in his fifty-ninth year. Of his seven children, two only survived him, Charles, who was to lose his throne and then his head, and Elizabeth, the titular queen of Bohemia. His wife, Anne of Denmark, had been dead now some six years.

. . . . . .

The abilities of James were obscured during his long reign, firstly, by the natural timidity of his character and, secondly, by the efficient system of government that Cecil had forged before his coming to the throne, and which continued to work systematically and efficiently through James's reign. That natural timidity, he inherited from his father. He had very little of his mother's character, but the characteristics he inherited from his other parent were strengthened and made permanent by the condition of his upbringing. He was born among explosions and treasons, in a country sundered by differences. It was a country where two religious factions were fighting to the death, and, hovering about these two factions, were the big lords to whom the religious duel was but an excuse for loot, for the seizing of power, for revenge, or merely for violence. The religious battle did not mean much to the lords. Their opinions were very elastic and they were equally ready to be bought by either side. In practice it was Cecil in England who held the largest purse, and it was to him that they finally tended to turn. There was no religion of patriotism or unselfish love of country in the sixteenth century, as we know the thing to-day. The love of country was not yet a rallying cry and the Crown had lost its place in the affections of the people. It was to an anarchist state that James was born, where swords were seldom in their scabbards, where the old religion was slowly

dying, and its representative and defender, James's mother, he only knew as a prisoner. Cecil and his long purse were on the winning side, and a Protestant Scotland looked towards the future hungrily.

Under these conditions was the character of James moulded and, as he grew up, it is no wonder that he shrank from the sight of cold steel. He grew up under a great fear, and that fear marred all his future actions. Yet he was an able man. He had both judgment and quickness of perception. There is, indeed, more in Sully's remark on James, that he was "the wisest fool in Europe" than has been generally understood. To get the full flavour of the title, it is necessary to remember that there were a very great number of fools in Europe in King James's time. But the abilities of the first Scottish King of England were eclipsed by the man's lack of courage. When he left Scotland he left a land where a large number of unsuccessful conspiracies were at last tending towards one big and successful conspiracy, and he came into a country where that last conspiracy was already a success. It was, in fact, so successful that the conspirators were able to call him to the throne. They had got the machine well running, and it was his place to watch, while they directed. And poor James did nothing more important than watch. His wretched timidity restrained him from action. He had not the heart to rebel against the Cecils and their followers. Fear, indeed, ruled his whole life and it was the Parliamentary lords who ruled his fear. He was afraid to assert himself in the matter of kingship, though it was with him an article of faith that the King ruled by Divine Right. He was afraid to support the Catholics, though they represented the sole support he could expect to find against the big Protestant lords. He was afraid of involving himself in any war, and, therefore, the Crown of England was held in supreme contempt by foreign monarchs, while James wore it. He was afraid of Arabella Stuart, though indeed she was the very poorest

excuse for a menace and, therefore, he permitted himself to take steps that resulted in her death. He was afraid of death to such an extent that he went about in uncomfortable, quilted doublets that he hoped would be able to cheat the assassin's blade, and this curious trait really succeeded in creating a new fashion in the garments of men, but that was a poor distinction for a King. In a word, the wretched Scotsman was so afraid of the spectacle of James the King, that James never did become the King.

Another and smaller thing that obscured the talents of James from the world was that, though he possessed some degree of wit, it was a wit that went without humour. He had a taste for buffoonery and, since the times had changed, often became his own court jester. But, still, he had no humour. Perhaps it was crushed out of him by the Calvinism that was his early food, but, at least, it was not there. It was this lack of humour that prevented him from taking a broad view, from balancing his opinions, or from ever forgetting his soul-shaking fears. He could not look beyond himself. In all his visions, James the King lurked. It was this lack of humour that made men call him pompous and a prig. It was the narrowness consequent on this lack of humour that sent Bacon into banishment, and that permitted that brilliant rogue, Raleigh, to end his days in disgrace on the scaffold. A person gifted with a more humorous outlook would have had the sense to keep both of these talented and useful men about him, laughing at them and their misdeeds, it is true, but by that very means keeping them straight and letting the nation get its value out of them. Both of these men had much to contribute, and a larger-minded man would have derived from them what benefit they had to bestow. This deficiency in humour on the part of James, too, truly helped to disguise him from the people.

But with all his short-comings there was a very real tragedy in the life of James I. Before he came to

the English throne he was a pensioner to the Cecil group or clique, and after he was crowned King and held his court, he still remained a pensioner to the same persons. Nor was the circumstance improved by the fact that the pension was miserably inadequate to supply the needs of monarchy.

III

THE CROWN TAKES UP THE CHALLENGE

CHARLES I

CHARLES was in his twenty-fifth year when he ascended the throne. The handsome figure of the young King was very naturally thought to be all the more handsome, by comparison with his late father. Charles was, moreover, on the point of entering into matrimony with the beautiful French Princess, Henrietta Maria, a union that was expected to cement an eternal peace between the two countries of England and France. It was truly a beautiful picture that the new King and his bride presented, but a picture far too like the conclusion of a work of fiction to represent the beginning of a piece of history.

In spite of all appearances, the scales were already heavily tipped against the new King. In the first place, the character of Charles was utterly different from the character of the late King. James's character had nicely fitted into the framework created by the ruling lords. James had undoubtedly created a very evil precedent for one who not only believed in the Divine Right of Kings, but who intended to regulate his practice by such belief. Charles was not hampered by that fear that had controlled the activities of his sire. He was equally a Scotchman and, therefore, equally logical, but the conclusion of his logic was not spoiled by his temerity.

In the second place, the appointed French marriage of Charles constituted a deep offence in the eyes of the Parliamentary lords. It was a Catholic marriage that could not fail to react unfavourably to the well-established policy of persecuting Catholics, with

the intention, ultimately, of extinguishing them in England. Charles had, by his action, gone over to the enemy. He had taken a wife from the papists. The fact that it was as much his father's doing as his own did not alter the case against him.

In the next place, the rise of the Puritan sect in England was a menace that was not yet fully appreciated by the royalists. The Puritans, as the name implied, were concerned to purify the existing state of religious affairs in the kingdom, by purging religion of what they considered its grosser elements. It is one of the ironies of history that James I was not altogether unconnected with their appearance in England, while they, in turn, were not altogether unconnected with his son's disappearance from the kingship. It was to James, mainly, that the new version of the Scriptures was due, and this Jacobite translation it was that went to the heads of the Puritans. The Old Testament with its pre-christian ideals, its jealous and destroying God, its ruthlessness and its tales of ancient barbarism, sent a mad thrill through the new sect. It helped to charge the new movement with fanaticism. The Puritans likened themselves to the Chosen People, and, for their enemies, they selected the choicest names of the enemies of the early Jews. The Jacobite words of the Bible provided, as it were, a rallying cry. It was to them a banner round which they might gather, and it gave the sect a common language of encouragement and denunciation. With ancient prophecies on their lips, they went forward to fulfil them. The sect, in a word, would have been a problem, possibly a menace, in any country, but coming, as they did, at this time and being used, as they were, by the Parliamentary group, they grew to something different and altogether bigger : almost to a conquering army. This mob of fanatics fighting the battle of the Lord, but the old vengeful Lord of the Old Testament, rather than the Prince of Peace of the New, materially tipped the balance against the new King.

Likewise to the King's disadvantage was the personality of Buckingham. Buckingham was the King's friend and adviser; he was also the King's misfortune. Many looked on Buckingham sourly, and they had watched his rapid rise with evil eyes. . . .

Such, then, were the extraordinary drawbacks with which Charles started his reign. In addition, he had to face all the ordinary drawbacks that would have harassed a new sovereign in any case, and these became apparent as soon as he met his Parliament (1625). This first meeting with Parliament is important, for it is symbolic of all that followed. The Parliamentary lords threw down the gage at their first meeting; they defined the issue, making it clear that the King must accept their terms or prepare for war.

The first question was, obviously, the question of supply, or income. It is necessary to remember that the supply originally granted to his father (known as "Tonnage and Poundage") did not, in point of fact, cover the charges for which it was granted, i.e., the support of the monarchy. Its value, as has been stated, had entirely altered during the last century. The consequence of James's inadequate income was that he bequeathed to his successor personal debts to the amount of seven hundred thousand pounds. Moreover, the accession and marriage of Charles had involved him in new and abnormal expenses. When they met, therefore, Charles threw himself on the bounty of his Parliament, frankly making known his needs.

But the Parliament on which he thus threw himself was not a "King's" Parliament. The Lords were divided into the Buckinghamites and the anti-Buckinghamites. In the Commons the new "Saints," or Puritans, formed the most powerful group. They were inclined to be harsh even among themselves, holding the finer feelings in contempt, and intolerant of others, seeking to reform both Church and State, in accordance with their own curious notions of Scripture, and so on. They found much that they

wanted to reform in the State and in the established Church, but their main zeal, as yet, they reserved for the reform of the papists. And the King had just brought back a papist wife!

These zealots usually fought the same and each other's battles, but, and it is a cardinal point, the Puritan group at this stage had already learned to make common cause with the Country Party, which for its part, professed to seek the reform of abuse in the Crown and the defence of the people's liberty. It is a matter of supreme importance that these two parties, the Landlords and the Puritans, joined hands. The one party was out for the reformation of the Church, primarily, and, so far as its personal and peculiar views went, it was honest in its intention. The Country Party was out for the preservation of the liberties of the people and to check the power of the sovereign. But the point to observe about this union of the two parties, is that the Country Party was not honest in its intentions. It was not with the liberties of the people, but with the liberty, or licence, of the large landowners that they concerned themselves. They would tolerate nobody above themselves. It was not the liberties of the people that moved them; the people got no liberties out of that struggle between the big fortunes and the King. What moved the landowners was the desire to take away from the Monarchy that which had hitherto been the rights of the Monarchy. The Party was not interested even in preserving its own liberty, but rather in striving to take over the powers of the King and vest them in the landlords. It was not in checking the abuse of the prerogative that it busied itself, but in appropriating the prerogative to itself.

The union, then, was the union of Pure Religion with the Liberty of the People, but the religion was to be purified by a group of fanatics who held eccentric and pre-christian views on what was religion and, indeed, what was purity; and the Liberty of the People was to be preserved by a party that was

endeavouring to capture the liberties of the King, and that had already captured a great many other things for itself.

It was to a Parliament of these dominant elements that Charles made his first speech, a gracious oration that at another time would have received the customary expressions of goodwill and of the subjects' faith in their sovereign. But Charles was a Stuart, and the tragedy of the Stuarts was now being played on the stage of England. The House was full of murmurs of suspicion and distrust of the King. Charles was conjured to put into execution immediately the existing laws against Catholics. It was a sort of test that the Commons applied to their King—who had just married a Catholic. Charles returned an answer, and it was in the main a satisfactory one to them, but not to him, and then came the Commons' reply to his request for supplies, or, more plainly, the Commons' decision as to the limits of the King's income. The old grant of "tonnage and poundage" was voted to him, *but voted for one year's duration.* The sinister meaning of this limitation to one year will be understood when it is recalled that ever since the reign of Henry VI the duties of "tonnage and poundage" had been granted to the sovereign for life. Moreover, Charles had requested that the sum of three hundred thousand pounds should be allocated for the equipment of a navy. Two subsidies, together representing less than half this amount were granted.[1]

Charles received the news with surprise and indignation. He was stung to the quick by such early, harsh treatment. Since his father's death a new note had crept into politics, very suddenly and defiantly.

[1] Charles' intention was to establish a permanent Navy, to replace the custom of requisitioning ships and getting together a fleet only when danger threatened. The old haphazard and uncertain method was no longer practicable. It was no longer possible to compete with Continental Fleets on these terms. Though originating the idea, Charles failed in its realization, and the foundation of a permanent fleet was left for his son, James, Duke of York, to accomplish.

It was the note of challenge that the Commons plainly sounded. Charles was first bewildered. He did not, as yet, fully recognize the new note, but as soon as he did so inform himself, he picked up the gage, in the name of the Monarchy, but also of the People of England. It is important to note that the Parliamentary group held that it acted in the interests of the People, but Charles certainly believed that it was in their interests that he took up the Commons' challenge. On that point Charles was undoubtedly right. But the decision regarding the royal finances was taken, as it was meant to be taken, as a preliminary of war between the Court and the Parliament. Though the war did not take place for nearly seventeen years, skirmishes almost immediately began between the advocates of the Court and its opponents. But having delivered their challenge to the King, the Parliament was hastily adjourned. A dangerous mortality was at present raging in London, from which more than twelve hundred persons had died during the last week. The Commons fled from the infection—as also from the King's acknowledgment of their financial support.

It was Charles's misfortune that though he might always be relied upon to bring disaster on himself, there were never lacking those who would bring disaster on him. Thus, the two negotiations of his late father and carried on with Spain and France respectively, each brought misfortune in its train. The sudden and disgraceful rupture of relations with Spain that Buckingham had contrived when he broke off the discussion, succeeded in bringing about a war with the Spanish power. It was declared mainly for the satisfaction of Buckingham's vanity and though entered upon before James I's death, did not actually start until Charles was on the throne. And when it did start, it was all over, so to speak. The affair does not deserve the name of War, but it was certainly a national disgrace. In October, 1625, ninety ships, with an army of ten thousand men under the leader-

ship of Viscount Wimbledon (until then Sir Edward Cecil) left Plymouth harbour. It sailed for Cadiz. The troops were landed and marched inland. On the march the men discovered several cellars stored with wine and the march was interrupted for a drunken carouse. It was never resumed. The feeble-minded leader, thanking his God that no enemy had appeared, led his troops precipitately back to the fleet. Then, having failed to intercept a rich convoy of Spanish merchants from the West Indies, the army returned to Plymouth. Though they had come upon no enemy, the loss of over a thousand men was reported, a pestilential disease having ravaged each ship of the fleet. Thus was the war with Spain waged.

The trouble with France was almost equally disgraceful. It arose on the subject of the Catholics. With regard to this unfortunate sect, the King was at a loss how to proceed. The secret treaty in their favour, to which he had agreed at the time of his marriage, he was obliged to keep secret. His enemies, and especially the Puritans, would have no indulgence shown to Catholics, and Charles must rely on them for his supplies. The question before him was to choose the lesser evil, to offend his own Parliament, or to break his treaty with the French King. Not unnaturally, in the circumstances, he chose to violate the treaty. To the appeals and demands of the zealots for the persecution of the papists (the source of all discord in the kingdom, they were verily persuaded) Charles, at length, gave way and the magistrates received orders to watch over the strict execution of the penal laws. In a word, the war against Catholics, that had been excused by the Gunpowder Plot, was now resumed with all the ferocity that had marked the Cecil policy in the last reign.

This news was quickly conveyed to France, where the French King was naturally ill pleased with Charles and with the dishonouring of the treaty. The failure of the English King to afford that protection to the Catholics that he had promised, was taken as an excuse

for breaking off relations, and commercial intercourse between the two nations was suspended. Charles endeavoured to turn the situation to his advantage, but the circumstances were against him. Seeing that he was not allowed to help the Catholics at home, he thought he might gain some goodwill with his own Parliament, if he gave help to the Protestants in France. The treaty was broken. It could not be upheld. The French alliance was lost with that breach of faith. It was no longer possible to look to France, but the fact might be used to make peace with his own Parliament. Moreover, to strike suddenly at France would be the best defence against a French attack, and such attack might be expected, now that relations had broken down between the two countries. At least, there might be some advantage in holding out help to the French Protestants. As it turned out Charles received no such advantage from his intervention in religious affairs in France.

The expedition was in charge of Buckingham, whose fleet consisted of forty-two ships and thirty-four transports. Buckingham appeared before La Rochelle, and immediately the note of comedy was introduced, for the Rochellois were taken by surprise at this unexpected, and largely unwanted, aid. They insisted on getting in the harvest of the year before they would consent to think about warlike measures. Moreover, they were alarmed at the sight of the formidable armament that Buckingham controlled, and feared that he might come as an ally and remain as a master. Though Protestants, they were French Protestants, and preferred a French overlord, even though he were a Catholic, to the intriguing Englishman who now came armed to their aid. True Frenchmen, likewise, they did not neglect their harvest. When, at length, they were moved to take an active interest in the Buckingham expedition, the combined forces laid siege to the castle of St. Martin. On the eleventh week of the siege, a fleet succeeded in bursting through their boom and revictualling the

fortress. The disheartened Buckingham, unable to carry the place by assault, now abandoned his whole expedition. He withdrew his troops, and they were not got out of the lines without heavy casualties. He returned to England, the failure of the enterprise heavy upon him.

The ill success of this adventure gave Charles no heart to meet his Parliament. He had no peace-offering for them when they met (1627). The story of the reign of Charles I, indeed, is the story of the big Parliamentary lords slowly putting pressure upon the King. Each time the King meets his Parliament, it is to engage in a fresh battle, at which the Commons try to snatch something more of the royal dignity, and the King tries to maintain his traditional rights. From the very start they were able to hold him through their control of the financial situation, and each time he made a move, they united in opposing him. Thus, his treaty with the King of France for the relief of his Catholics, was rendered a scrap of paper because he had no power to carry out its provisions. Thus, his plans for the formation of a national navy were brought to naught, by the non-support of the Lords and Commons. Thus, his belief that all minerals found under the soil should be regarded not as private, but as Crown property,[1] a defensible doctrine, and national, was violently repudiated by the landlords. Thus, his Commission set up for the purpose of enquiring into the recent enclosures and the stealing of the common and forest lands, which commission received special powers to punish the guilty heavily, was the final act that brought about the Civil War.

Again, the King's friends were not safe from the Parliament. One by one they were filched from him, nor had he power to protect them. Buckingham they were after, and there is no reasonable doubt that they would have pulled him down but for the assassin's

[1] It is curious to note that this would be considered a Socialist doctrine to-day.

blade that took the Duke beyond their reach. Two or three times, Buckingham had been practically overthrown, and on the next occasion upon which they had grabbed at him, he would have gone. The loss of Buckingham would not seriously have harmed Charles, but the loss of other advisers and friends was more important, and in the long run most certainly spurred the King on to the war. Thus was his chaplain, Dr. Montague, taken from him on the plea of heresy. Laud was removed in turn, and, finally, was the great Strafford plucked down and hurried to the grave.

It was a long series or repetition of the same event: the Parliamentary lords testing (and proving) their strength against the King, and Charles forced to yield point by point. The King would make a stand. Pressure was brought to bear upon him, and he was compelled to give way. Such is really the whole story of the reign, until the victim of this constant pressure reached the stage when he could yield no more. Having given up everything, he resolved on one last throw, and made a stout effort to be a King. He raised his Standard and appealed to the people, whose battle he was fighting against the encroaching lords. The lords also appealed to the people, and they appealed in the name of liberty and of that fanaticism that was at the time raging through the country. They even dug up the feudal document known as *Magna Charta*, interpreting it in a manner that would have shocked Stephen Langton and the original lords who secured John's signature to the document. The King and the people should have come together, as through history they had joined. But there was this religious fanaticism, temporary but terrible, between them. They did not make contact. At the point when they should have met and united to throw off the yoke of the powerful, but new lords, they were split up by religious disputes. The King and the people did not come together. As a result the monarchy was uprooted and the aristocracy estab-

lished itself in England. And the people, well, they have lost all property, since the monarchy perished.

After the disastrous attempt to assist the French Protestants against the French King, Charles, as stated, had no heart to meet his Parliament. He had nothing to show for all the pains and expenses and for the dishonouring of the secret treaty. Moreover, since this mishap was coupled with the Spanish disgrace, the prestige of the King was considerably lowered, not only in the opinion of contemporary sovereigns and neighbouring states, but in the opinion of his own people. King James, at least, had given them dishonourable peace, but his son was doing worse; he was giving them disgraceful war. Again, the King was not happy in his private domestic circle. Henrietta Maria was a tempestuous little Princess, with a will of her own. She was not satisfied with her treatment in England, and that of her servants, nor did she understand the peculiar position of her husband. Brought up in the strong French monarch's court, she did not yet realize the great battle that was being waged between Charles and the large landowners. She thought the King was merely weak, and she was only half right. He was weak, but not merely weak. He was weak because his hands were tied by the cords of the Parliamentarians. Altogether, Charles was finding his situation difficult, but not yet desperate. In the interval before Parliament met he made an experiment of collecting revenue by imposing new duties on merchandise on his own authority. Technically he was within his own right in so doing, but the judges declared the proceeding illegal, and Charles abandoned the practice.

The constant and consistent attack, that had been maintained against Catholics for the last twenty years or more, was having a very important effect that about this time was beginning to be noticed. Catholics had gradually been forced out of public life. The intense persecution that had been kept up against them had compelled them to give up, or refrain from

seeking, public office, or indeed any prominent positions that would, in fact, make their religion seem all the more conspicuous. This consequence had been foreseen by the framers of the penal laws, had indeed helped them to frame them. What had happened by now was that the heads and controlling powers of all the important professions and public offices had passed into the hands of the Parliamentarians. They had acquired control over the Law, over the Universities, the big corporations, livery companies, and so on. As for the Church, the Puritan element was not yet controlling that, but already they were making a beginning. They had still to get rid of Laud, and after him, of Strafford. But already they were breaking up images and smashing stained glass. It was their way of entering a church, with a view to taking possession. And it is interesting to note that one band of these Puritans, dissatisfied with the slow progress of their reformation of the Church of England, and feeling that they were not appreciated in their own country, departed for America. It is often claimed for them that they migrated in order that they might enjoy religious freedom, but, in point of fact, they established in the New World a religious intolerance that was never equalled in England. It was this sect of the Puritans which laid the foundations of the State of New England.

The point at present is, however, that Catholics had been driven from public life and their places supplied by the nominees of the Parliament. Even among the big merchants, Catholics tended to disappear. The disabilities under which they laboured prevented the accumulation of big fortunes or the building up of trade. They lost their standing among men of commerce, and their political influence at this time was practically nil.

When the King took upon himself the responsibility of levying new duties on the merchandise before the meeting of Parliament, it was the judges of

the Parliament group who declared the practice illegal. It is not contended that the presence of Catholics among the judges would have come to any different decision, though indeed the King was within his rights, but it is contended that when the King took such a step, the decision of the Parliamentary judges that the thing was illegal was automatic and expected.

Once more the King had to meet his Parliament, and once more Parliament exerted its pressure. Charles's periodical meetings with his Lords and Commons, in fact, grows more and more like a naughty boy appearing before his guardians to ask for more pocket money. The difference, of course, was that the heavy attitude of the Parliamentary guardians was assumed, to cover their real lack of authority. Their only right was their big fortunes, the accumulation of church property, but, as the King could not maintain himself without means, he must eternally appear before them for revenue and subsidies. His distress was their opportunity. Their whole plan was to wrest the power from the central monarchy and to distribute it among themselves. Looking back, it is easy to see that whatever Charles did would have been wrong. Whatever line of action he took, the Parliament, with its control of the purse, would have opposed him. It would have opposed him because it considered that he should not have the power to propose and follow *any* line of action. The line of action, the Parliament and the Parliament alone, desired to have the power to take. Parliament, moreover, presumed that it spoke for the people of England, but in very fact it spoke for the little group of people whose organ was the Parliament, and the large fortunes upon which they rested, and which had, in large measure, been taken from the people of England.

The new pressure that his opponents now put upon Charles was to demand his assent to the celebrated "Petition of Rights." It was not of course the petition that the Commons wanted, but to take some

of the remaining strength from the monarchy. Charles, on this occasion, scarcely knew how to return an answer, seeing that he was asked to abandon some of the rights of his predecessors. He resolved to dissemble. Perhaps he was wise ; he was certainly wrong.

In August, 1628, the Duke of Buckingham was assassinated at Portsmouth. His slayer was one Joseph Felton, but whether Felton acted for himself, or for others, will never be known. The Parliament refused to put him on the rack to extort a confession, discovering, suddenly, that torture was not justifiable according to the law of England. In the case of Guy Fawkes, apparently, it was justifiable. But the deed was done and few, save Charles, were sorry for the loss of Buckingham. He had been a thorn in the side of England, ever since James I raised his cupbearer to the rank of royal favourite. Buckingham had grace and fascination, but the trouble with him was that he knew it. He prided himself, too, on his abilities and they were considerable, yet vanity was strong enough within him to ruin all that he might do well, and flattery and fortune completely demoralized the man. He died at the early age of thirty-three, and his death was perhaps fortunate for him, in that it substituted the assassin's blade for the executioner's axe. There is little doubt that Parliament would eventually have had his blood—if indeed they did not get it.

At the next Parliament (1629) that assembled, the country gentlemen demanded that their grievances should be attended to before the question of supply could be raised, and the zealots, or " Saints," as they called themselves, contended that the question of religion came before that of revenue. The House became violent. It was an organized ramp and Charles felt he had had enough. Parliament was dissolved and three of the most violent members of the opposition were singled out for punishment. They refused to plead their case, but were imprisoned during the royal pleasure.

It was a slight and fleeting victory, and Charles hastened to follow it up with a further effort. He resolved to govern, for the time, without the intervention of Parliament. To strengthen his administration, he tempted with the bribe of office the most formidable of his opponents in the late Parliament. The attempt failed, as did so many of Charles's, for though his adversaries had no objection to taking office under him, they advanced nothing in their love of him. They still remained his opponents, and they knew that his experiment was a novelty that could not long survive. Sooner or later the necessity of the Sovereign would oblige him to throw himself on the Parliament that he had so dramatically dissolved. They knew that he must eventually come to the purse holders. To Archbishop Laud, Charles resigned the government of the Church, and Laud endeavoured to marshal it in support of the King, watching its interest warily. It was to cost him dear.

The first step that the King took was to put his foreign affairs in order. He had now come to see the folly of embroiling foreign states in war, while he himself was engaged in one long war with his own powerful subjects. He, therefore, hastened to put himself right with both France and Spain. It was fortunate for Charles that neither of these great nations had taken his two raiding expeditions seriously. With ironic generosity, Philip sent back, without ransom, the prisoners taken at Cadiz, and Louis returned those captured at Rhé. Reconciliations between England and these two states followed, and Charles had time to turn his attention to the really pressing matter at home, the improvement of the national revenue. The closing of his two "wars" had obliterated one source of expense, yet the patrimony of the Crown had been so diminished, (1) by the decline of the value of money—during the last hundred years the purchasing power had dropped to a sixth of its former value—and (2) by the policy of the late King who had sold Crown lands in order

to raise capital: that Charles was unable to support the ordinary charges of government without additional aid from his subjects. He, therefore, continued to levy the duties of "tonnage and poundage," and raised the rates on several kinds of merchandise. He also contrived to raise revenue by the revival of the numerous monopolies. Charles's monopolies, however, were not sold to individuals, but to incorporated companies of merchants and tradesmen. It was a revival, in fact, of a principle of the Guilds. One section of the community was given the exclusive right of performing one useful office for the community. The great difference between this new form of monopoly and the form it had taken under the late Tudors, was that the right was sold to a competent body of men and not to a favoured individual; the difference between public and private monopoly. In this case, the company paid a lump sum for the privilege of dealing in one set of goods and a fixed duty on the commodity they manufactured, or used for sale. In this way, and with several other small measures, Charles made an effort to meet his costs. He had gained a temporary victory over his encroaching Parliament. The Parliamentarians had drawn back. But it was only a battle that Charles had won, not a campaign. He had, for the moment, stemmed the tide, but not turned it. All around were his enemies. He could not displace them, for they were everywhere, while there was hope of gain or power. They drew back for the while, but they drew back confidently, knowing that sooner or later the King's necessity would provide an excuse for them all to surge forward again.

And when they advanced again, it would be to overwhelm him. So, the country party took to the country and bided its time. They watched, waiting to strike. So, the party of "Saints" fought their battle in the Church against Laud and the Established Faith. The reform of the Church was their special task, and, as they watched Laud revive the ritual,

enforce the exact observance of the rubric, cut off the supply of nonconforming ministers, etc., etc., their hearts hardened within them. With words taken from the Jacobite translation of the Old Testament they prepared themselves for the great day that was so surely coming.

Moreover, they made use of the time preparing their plans for the killing of joy in England. The theatres, for which Shakespeare had written and acted, must go. They were haunts of vice and the origin of dissolute lives. It was the gloomy barrister, William Prynne, who outlined their reformation scheme for society. In a volume of not less than one thousand quarto pages, entitled *Histriomastix*, he defined the Puritan attitude towards pleasure. Theatre players, he termed ministers of Satan. He attacked equally both the amusements of the Court and of the common people. Dancing, for instance, was the Devil's profession, and each step in a dance, he declared, was a step towards hell. No less bitter was he on the subject of hunting and such-like sports. The May-poles must be cut down and public festivals abolished. Decorating the house with green ivy at Christmas was a mere pagan custom and any way, what was Christmas? The last part of the word was only the papist word "mass," and Christmas was not mentioned in the Old Testament. Music, also, was to be forbidden. Against the Church, likewise, was Prynne defiant. The silks and satins of the divines were a mockery; the chants and the bowing before altars an abomination.

It has sometimes been wondered whence the grim doctrines against human pleasure, that the Puritans held so strongly, derived, and how Puritan England could come so quickly upon the England of Shakespeare, which had retained so much of the characteristics of the Merry England of mediæval times. They derive from Prynne. It was he who outlined the Puritan attitude towards the sunshine of the world. They put him in the pillory at Cheapside, but that

only made a martyr of the man, without silencing him. His intense fanaticism gave him a standing among Puritans, and his ideas thoroughly mastered them. There was a ruthlessness in his logic that appealed to these men, who were now steeping their minds in the savage scenes of pre-christian warfare. It is curious to note how some of the ideas lingered on among certain sects until quite modern times. But their origin was Prynne.

Two matters of great moment were now undertaken that were in the end to bring the whole trouble between Charles and his Parliament to a head. The first was the Commission of Royal Forests and Chases, and the second, the vital quarrel concerning "Ship Money."

The original forest lands in this country were of considerable extent. A forest land was not, of course, a forest in the sense in which we use the word. The old Latin word, *foresta*, meant waste land. During the lapse of years, but especially of late years, these lands, which were Crown property, had shown an alarming tendency to diminish in size, or to disappear wholly. Indeed, a process was going on which, if it were allowed to continue, would speedily leave no Crown lands at all. It was a process akin to that by which the Parliament had been working to break the strength of the central monarchy by stealing the power of the Sovereign, bit by bit, and vesting it in themselves. In the case of the Crown lands, the ground was being taken, little by little. It was a state that monarchy could not tolerate, if Charles were to remain King, and, just as he had first stopped the Parliamentarians by dissolving the House, so now, by a logical step, he endeavoured to stop the attrition that was reducing the Crown lands and, thus, the monarchy.

The Commission commenced its work, Lord Holland with his assistants holding court successively in several counties. They enquired into the question of original boundaries and the landholders were sum-

moned to prove their titles, or, alternatively, to answer for their encroachments. It was the term "encroachments" that alarmed the landlords, for, not only had the Crown lands been tampered with, but those lands that had been considered common lands had also been encroached upon. Furthermore, in the days of the previous century when abbey and church property had been confiscated and handed over, or sold, when the new, but now wealthy families had been established, a great deal had been done for which there was no title proof. In a word, the Commission to enquire into the boundaries of the Forest Lands struck directly at the large landowners and generally the big fortunes which aspired to rule the country, and the lords rightly looked upon it, and upon Charles, the power behind it and which gave it driving force, as a real and very pressing menace to themselves. If Charles got the lands that it was highly probable the Commission would claim for him, then he would be in far less danger of having to come to the landowners for money. In fact, the independence of the King might, in some measure, be re-established. The process that Henry VIII had unwillingly begun would be reversed, and instead of the King being hedged in by the big fortunes, he would tower above that hedge. Yet again, if the common lands were returned to the people, the people would have every reason to be satisfied with their King. King and people might unite, as in the old days of strong central authority, against the big lords, and then the big lords were ruined; even as the big barons had been ruined in the early Middle Ages. Even the religious fanaticism of the times might not prove strong enough to marshal the people against the King.

With the first findings of the Commissioners and the possibilities they opened up, the landlords took alarm. It was as if an awful and unexpected chasm had suddenly yawned beneath their feet, and where they least expected to find it; where, indeed, they thought their feet most firmly planted. The whole

order, established now for nearly a century and confirmed in its position by the power of two successive Cecils who controlled two sovereigns, took fright. It is this fright that we must keep in view in the events that swiftly follow. It was to avert this earthquake that they acted in concert and acted quickly. It was this fear that stiffened resistance everywhere, and especially in the matter of the non-payment of Ship Money.

Among the records in the Tower there were found writs compelling the ports, on certain occasions, to provide ships for the King's use, and also obliging their neighbours of the maritime counties to contribute towards their expense. That is to say, by a custom that had not recently been observed, for special purposes, the ports were obliged (or privileged) to get together a fleet; nor were their fellow men of the seaboard counties debarred from assisting financially in this national work. Taking this custom, if a lapsed one, for a framework, Charles set about the task of fulfilling an earlier project of his, the establishment of a permanent, or at least semi-permanent Navy. The occasion was peculiar. The necessity for some established fleet to police the narrow seas was urgent, while the perennial necessity for some bulwark against foreign invasion was one that no wise monarch could afford to ignore. At this time, moreover, the right of the English Crown to the dominion of the narrow seas was disputed. Annually were the English fisheries invaded by the Dutch and the French. Unlawful captures were made by the ships of various nations that happened to be at war with each other, and even Turkish corsairs had occasionally penetrated the narrow waters, by whom slaves had been carried off from the coast of Ireland. In short, there was a clear case for the formation of an English sea-power, that could, at least, uphold the national honour and dignity in what were rightly considered English waters.

As a preliminary, or an experiment, writs were issued to London and the different ports, ordering

them to supply a certain number of ships, sufficiently armed and manned, to meet at Portsmouth on the 1st March, 1636. The experiment succeeded, and the Council resolved to extend the measure from the maritime towns to the whole kingdom. That is, they extended the principle logically. Since it was the whole country that the fleet was raised to protect and to resist attack, it was only fair and just that the whole country should contribute to it. The need of the time suggested that the older custom should be brought up to date, and that the whole country should be interested in its own defence. Writs were therefore issued to the sheriffs, informing each that his county was assessed at a special number of ships towards the national fleet for the following year, that the charge was estimated at a fixed sum, which sum must be levied on the inhabitants in the manner that subsidies were usually raised. By this method a yearly supply of two hundred and eighteen thousand, five hundred pounds was raised for Charles's Navy, and it should be remembered to the King's credit that he carefully devoted the sum to the purpose for which it was demanded, resisting all temptation to use it in a number of ways that would have been very convenient to him. A fleet of more than sixty ships yearly swept the narrow seas, and the admiral was ordered to sink such foreign vessels as would not salute the English flag. For a moment, in fact, the English Navy was in being, but the experiment was to pass, not to be revived until after the death of Charles Stuart.

The necessity of a navy to the country and the only logical deduction, that the nation, and not merely a portion of the nation, should contribute to its support, were reasonable in the extreme. The expansion of an old custom to cover a present urgency was part of the duty of a King ; indeed, its neglect would have been culpable. Still, it became of importance to have the legality of the tax established by the courts of law. After a certain amount of shuffling and dis-

cussing the judges declared, that " where the good and safety of the kingdom is concerned the charge ought to be borne by the whole realm." It was a just and true general decision and seems to us natural enough. But for more definite judgment, and as a preparation for future proceedings, two questions were asked of the judges :

(1) " Whether in cases of danger to the good and safety of the kingdom in general, the King could not impose ship money for its defence and safeguard, and by law compel payment from those who refused ?"

(2) " Whether he were not the sole judge both of the danger and when and how it was to be prevented ? "

To these two questions, ten of the twelve judges assembled in the Hall of Serjeants Inn decided in favour of the prerogative and the other two, though they dissented, subscribed their names, on the principle that the judgment of the majority was that of the whole body.

There was a logic about all this that was Scotch rather than English. It was no compromise, but a ringing declaration, and it rang bitterly in the hearing of the big landlords. If the King had a right to levy tax in the first place, for the defence of the realm, then obviously he had the power to say when that defence was required. It was a clear statement that the central authority intended to exercise its authority and, furthermore, the logical implications that followed were more disturbing still. For if (and as) it was declared legal for the King to raise a tax for the establishment of a navy, could it be unlawful for him to raise a tax for the equipment of an army ? Obviously not, but if the King did raise an army, then where would the big landlords stand ? Instead of circling the throne, a golden circle, the throne would be surrounded by a ring of steel, the spikes pointing outwards, and the potential power of the big fortunes would vanish before it could be realized. It was Strafford, the King's friend and

adviser, and the man who would have made him a king, who saw and stated this logical conclusion to the naval tax, and he would have worked to bring it about. But the big lords were awaiting their time —and their time had nearly come. They played their part slowly, but theirs was a slowness that made for success.

It was John Hampton, the Aylesbury squire and large landowner, who stood up to protest against the payment of "Ship Money." He challenged the King's right to levy tax. Hampton had a constitutional objection to the payment of money; but not to the receiving of it. In 1626, he had been imprisoned for his refusal to pay his assessment towards the loan of that year, and now he made use of the present occasion, to contest the right to tax subjects for the founding of a national Navy. The question was solemnly argued before the twelve judges and a majority declared in favour of the King.

The actual question that was debated was the question of the legality of "Ship Money," but it was obvious to all that "Ship Money" was but the excuse. The real and vital question was this: should the central authority be a central authority and vested in one person, or should that authority be divided up between the big fortune-holders, who should thus have the direction of the nation's affairs? Should the head of the State be a King, or should it be a council, that is an Aristocracy? That was the essential point, and it was upon that point that the wealthy families challenged the monarchy. If the King were allowed to act as a King, then the families that had grown powerful since the time of Henry VIII must lose their power, and with it their great wealth. And the only way to avoid the calamity was to sacrifice the King. It was a clear question and it demanded a clear decision. Which way was the nation to go, with the King, or without him? Such was the real matter at stake. Such was the issue, and Ship Money, and the rest, were only general excuses to get at the

real matter. But what decided the question once and for all was that which the big lords had seen from the first: the poverty of the King.

Let there be no doubt as to the issue involved. The condition of the island kingdom of Britain demanded that a Navy should be kept in being. If Charles were King of England, he had a right to ask a Navy of his subjects. If he had such a right, it was true that all his subjects, in proportion to their means, must provide the Navy. The tax for the foundation and maintaining of the Navy must not fall only on the ports or on the maritime counties, but on the whole country. But if, on the other hand, Charles were not King of England, but merely a figure-head (as his father had been) then the whole balance automatically shifted, and the rights of the monarchy were divided out among the big landowners, as the big owners willed. Charles, perhaps unfortunately, believed that he was King by Right Divine. It was his view that the King must rule his subjects, and not that a few of his subjects should rule him and the rest of his subjects. The few subjects, on the other hand, who were the large landowners, and who controlled the big fortunes in the country, held the opinion that not only did their wealth entitle them to direct the affairs of the nation, but their very wealth and possessions *depended* upon their directing the country's affairs. They were certainly right in one respect. If they did not take upon themselves the function of ruling, they would never be able to retain their vast wealth. With it they were too dangerous for a King to leave them alone.

The plain issue between the King and his great subjects had been so much obscured by irrelevant points and party labels and the avoiding of definite terms, that it has been thought well to state it in bald terms here. The opposition of John Hampton to the Navy Tax has often been quoted as a sign of the times. It was indeed such a sign. It meant that the late Parliament, and those it represented, were

returning to the fray, after they had given the King a sufficient interval to involve himself in fresh financial difficulties. He had not wasted the time, as we shall see. But quite apart from such difficulties, it was clear to the coming Aristocracy that it was unwise to leave the King any longer to his freedom.

The King's troubles were beginning to press heavily upon him. In both Ireland and Scotland there were religious disputes and difficulties, but of a very opposite nature. Charles was a loyal Protestant and he endeavoured to establish Protestantism in Ireland. The result was disaster, for the people, then as now, insisted on remaining Catholics. It was Strafford who worked for the King in Ireland. In Scotland, too, the King endeavoured to establish Protestantism, the Protestantism that he knew in England, and which he was persuaded was the only true religion, and, therefore, fit to be practised by all his subjects. He tried to introduce the English Liturgy into Scotland, and the result was suitably illustrated in Edinburgh when the poor woman, Jenny Geddes, hurled her stool at the parson's head. The Scottish form of worship was extremely Puritan, more Puritan, indeed, than the religion of the Puritans in England. Hardened by the logic of Calvin and confirmed by the scenes of barbarous warfare that they found in the Old Testament, the Scotch were not likely to be satisfied with the comparative mildness of the English Liturgy. The Kirk ordered every Scotchman who valued the pure faith to come to the capital to observe a solemn fast, as a preparation for the renewal of the Covenant betweeen God and Israel. On the appointed day, the Covenant was duly signed and the Covenanters sprang into being. They meant business. They abolished episcopacy altogether and began to arm themselves for war. It was the unfortunate Laud who was sent to work for the King in Scotland.

It was soon borne in upon Charles that Scotland, his native land, was seething with rebellion. The Kirk was openly, almost contemptuously, rebellious

and in the name of pure religion, every man capable of bearing arms was now in regular training. The King hastened to send an army north, but he was unable to afford to send a sufficient number of men. His poverty struck home again and with biting strength. The force he was able to dispatch was totally inadequate to meet the situation and uniformly unsuccessful in every action it undertook. Disaster followed on disaster, the ill-equipped and ill-trained English troops being no match for the trained army of fanatics it was called upon to meet. Soon the English were driven to negotiate with the Covenanters, for only by negotiation could Charles gain a breathing pause.

A second campaign against the Scotch was imperative, but the King badly needed money. Strafford advised Charles to summon a Parliament, as the most legal manner of procuring more abundant supplies for his war. And so, after an interval of more than ten years Parliament once again met. Charles met his two Houses without expectations of success or assistance. He explained to them the position of affairs in Scotland and the nature of the aid he required and he exhibited before them a letter, signed by seven of the principal covenanters, soliciting aid from the King of France. The Commons, however, refused to interest themselves in either the affairs of Scotland, or in the wants of the sovereign. The King's necessity was once more their opportunity and, moreover, they had been waiting long for this day. They prepared a statement of their grievances (under the direction of Pym) which they presented to the King. It was yet another instance of the big subjects putting pressure on the King, and with a gesture of impatience, Charles dissolved the Parliament. This very brief meeting of the two Houses in 1640 was known later as the "Short Parliament." It was certainly of brief duration, but it was the last Parliament over which Charles was to triumph. The next, or the "Long Parliament," survived him.

The King again endeavoured to get together an army for Scotland and, after a great deal of trouble, at length found himself at the head of some six thousand men, instead of the thirty or forty thousand men he required for his purpose. On the 20th August, 1640, Leslie with twenty-three thousand infantry and three thousand cavalry crossed the Tweed to join issue with Charles's small force. Southwards the Scotch army moved, the ministers forming the vanguard, Bibles in hand, from the pages of which they discovered copious useful names for their foes. The air, indeed, was thick with biblical denunciation. The English were "the troublers of Israel," "the Firebrands of Hell," "the Balaams," "the Doegs," "the Rabshakehs," "the Tobiahs," "the Korans," etc., etc. It was this stern army that came upon the unprepared army of Charles,[1] and routed it at the Newburn passage of the Tyne. The English were forced to retreat, leaving the two northern counties in the undisputed possession of the Scots.

Once more Charles was compelled to meet his Parliament. The failures in which his poverty had now involved him left him an easy prey to the Commons, the opposition to himself being led by Pym and Hampton. They had watched the King go north with his insufficient army and they now saw him return beggared. They rejoiced to see him come into their power. They had given him no help against the Scots, nay, they had actually hindered him in his preparations, raising riots in London and so forth. They have been called patriots, but patriotic they were not. Neither did they intend to pay for the Navy, nor to clear the Scots out of England. It was Charles, if anyone, who was the patriot. He, at least, put his country, and his countrymen's interest, first.

The Parliamentary pressure was renewed. The big landlords swung back to the attack and it was a final and victorious attack that they made. The King

[1] Strafford privately assured the King that his army would not be in a condition to take the field for at least two months.

had been forced to come to them, cap in hand. They seized the occasion to undo recent events. Charles's requirements were left entirely on one side. The first subject to come up for discussion was the eternal subject of the Catholics. The Puritan element was raging strongly, strongly enough to be willing to join hands and make common cause with the Covenanters. The Catholic body was well in the background at the moment, and no fear of a revival of " Popery " could have been more groundless. Nevertheless, orders were given that all Catholics should quit the court and be expelled from the army, Catholic houses were searched for arms, and so on. The Commons, likewise, undertook to purge and purify the Church. This meant two things, that the country party and the religious party (Puritan) were, to all intents and purposes, now one party, and secondly that proceedings would be immediately taken against Laud.

The next step was to pronounce the Commission for the raising of " Ship Money " illegal. The Navy that, for a brief space, had existed was thus extinguished, and at a time when the new and superior French Navy, the organization of Richelieu, was almost to be seen from the white cliffs of Dover, and the growing commercial power of Holland was already a maritime menace to this country. And when the Navy had ceased to be, the Commons at once gave their attention to that adviser of the King whom they really feared, Strafford, the King-maker. Strafford believed in the reality of the national monarchy and was thus the chief opponent of the rich merchants and squires who, through their organ of action, the House of Commons, were determined to press their novel and revolutionary claim to forbid all revenue that they did not themselves allow. Strafford was urged by his friends (and, possibly, by the King also) to fly. He was not that kind of man, however. What he did was entirely the opposite thing: suddenly and fearlessly he appeared in the

midst of his enemies. They were confused and disconcerted at his coming, the more so as they feared he might anticipate any charge against himself by accusing them of a treasonable correspondence with the Scots. It would have been a true charge, for such had been the patriotic action of the members of the present House. The gentlemen, who were so concerned at the illegality of "Ship Money," got over the difficulty caused by the abrupt appearance of Strafford by hiding themselves behind barred doors, while they deliberated on his case. Strafford was in this manner impeached of high treason. Arrested, he was not allowed to speak in his defence. It was still necessary, however, to try him and the trial accordingly took place at Westminster Hall. The proceedings lasted for a space of thirteen days and so ably was the defence conducted that the Commons really feared that they could not rid themselves of Strafford by that method. They, therefore, abandoned the unfinished trial and brought in a bill of attainder, which King Charles was forced to sign. Thus was Charles's friend and the prop upon which he depended, dragged from him, and on the 12th May, 1641, Strafford went to his death.

Strafford and Laud had both been detained in the Tower. As Strafford was led forth on his last journey, he passed the cell wherein Laud was imprisoned. He paused in his passing, to ask a blessing, and Laud raised his hand for that purpose; but grief overpowered him and he fell senseless to the floor. On the scaffold, Earl Strafford carried himself with dignity and composure. He saw an England that he had loved and had tried to maintain against the sweeping waves of innovation passing away, and he was not sorry to pass with it. At the first stroke his head was severed, and the devoted champion of the old claims of the Crown was no more. A moment before he had stood up with his enemies all around him, and in that moment his enemies had seemed but pigmy people.

Charles has often been blamed for signing the warrant that led Strafford to the scaffold, but Charles was now under the thumb of his Parliament. He was powerless to prevent the event. The big owners of land and of wealth closed in and snatched Strafford from him, and they did so because they recognized in Strafford a leader who was opposed to themselves on every point that mattered. Charles made every effort to save his friend and it was only at the last minute, when all else had failed, that with tears he yielded to the pressure that was put upon him.

The King now saw plainly that the central power that he represented was crumbling beneath him. The Parliamentarians, a victorious army, were advancing point by point, and Charles was as steadily retreating. The Commons, indeed, intended once and for all to crush the only power that stood between themselves and absolute control of the realm, and from this time until the King raised his standard at Nottingham, the interval was filled with the Commons advancing new and increasing indignities and Charles twisting and turning desperately, but finally having to give way. Thus, the Commission to enquire into the grave question of " Encroachments " was quashed and its findings lost. That danger to the landowners was finally brought to a conclusion, and they had nothing more to fear. Again, early in 1642—that fatal year for England—the Parliament presented its " Grand Remonstrance " to the King, a document that enumerated every real and imaginary grievance that the madness of a mob might invent. The King made one bold effort to seize the persons of the ring-leaders of the opposition, but it failed. He came in person to the House to arrest them, but the leaders had got wind of his coming, and when the King arrived, " the birds had flown." The Commons replied to this effort to restore authority by stirring up London against Charles, who was probably ill-advised nevertheless to remove himself with his family to Hampton Court. He was still less well

advised when he attempted to retreat from his former position and apologize to his enemies for his irregular entrance into the House of Commons.

But already it was evident that all hope of a reconciliation between the Court and Commons was at an end, and that the issue would be settled by the sword.

The Parliament now demanded that the command of the army should be entrusted to officers nominated by itself. It was probably this attempt of the Commons, and those for whom they stood, to get control of the army that decided the King to act. He still held that control and he must use it now, or never use it. He had already sent his wife, the luckless and (perhaps, therefore) peevish Henrietta Maria with their daughter to Holland, but his two elder sons, Charles and James, he kept with himself. Slowly he began to edge away from the metropolis, establishing himself first at Newmarket, but gradually withdrawing to the north. He finally fixed his head quarters at York. A bodyguard was raised for him by the northern gentlemen, and this was to be the nucleus of the army with which he was to oppose his enemies.

In Parliament it was realized that the desired issue had at last been forced. Both Houses were agreed to vote a levy of sixteen thousand men in opposition to the King. A short interval now elapsed, during which the two parties faced one another, each hesitating to engage, each testing the situation. Both knew that there was no withdrawing from the plain contest before them. The big question was, who should rule, the central monarchy that considered its right to rule of Divine derivation and that, moreover, considered that its duty to the people lay in keeping that right intact, preserved from the grasping hands of the big magnates whose instrument of action was the Parliament; or the big wealthy families, whose source of power was the control of the purse and whose strength depended on their seizing the reins of government as much as it depended upon

the various individuals acting in concert. These were the two contenders for the control of the Kingdom, and the people of England stood, in a certain sense, aloof. It was not their battle primarily, though they believed in the reality of the monarchy, but the battle to decide who should rule them. The control of finance gave the landowners and big merchants a strong pull in recruiting, and the fact that the country party was united with the " Saints " or Puritans, gave them a steady support in the country. But the King, too, had a large following. The central monarchy was still popular and strong in the minds of the people, in spite of happenings since the Reformation, and the fact that the King was not English, so much as Scotch. Still, it did not appear to the people that the war was theirs, and they had to be deliberately drawn into it before they could be prevailed upon to take it seriously. For the most part, Englishmen went on with their own daily works, leaving the essential question to be decided by the fighting of others. Perhaps that is a part of their tragedy to-day.

The first incident of a military nature occurred at Hull as early as April 23rd, 1642. Here the right of the Crown to command all military stores was repudiated, when Sir John Hotham declined to deliver the magazine under his command into the King's hands. A month later the astonishing spectacle of a double recruitment going on at the same time in England was to be witnessed. The King issued a Commission of Array, while the Parliament responded with an Ordinance of Militia. The first blow was struck in July of that year, when Goring refused to give up Portsmouth to the Parliament on application, declaring that his allegiance was one directly to the King. Parliament immediately laid siege to the town, and thus was the Civil War actually started.

Such incidents, however, were but preliminaries to the real opening of the war, which commenced on 22nd August. It was on that date that Charles solemnly summoned " all those north of Trent and

twenty miles south of that river," and ordered the ritual of the Raising of the Standard to take place in a large field outside Nottingham town. About two thousand men surrounded the colours, which number was increased by 4,000, but for the present that completed the little force. Against this 6,000 the Parliament had already voted an army of 16,000 men. By 22nd August the principal Parliamentary force lay at Northampton and numbered about 15,000. After the formal Raising of the Standard, Charles made one further attempt to avoid hostilities. His advances were repulsed, the Parliamentary side feeling itself now consciously superior. The contest, accordingly, began. The Civil War lasted practically for four years, ending with the capture of Oxford, 20th of June, 1646.

Before turning to a rapid survey of the chief features of the Civil War, a few preliminary remarks may not be out of place. In the first place, the importance of the war was not so much its military character, as its political. The number engaged at any time were usually small and the amount of actual fighting was very little. Compared with continental fighting at that date, the English Civil War resembled an exercise, or a rough kind of game, rather than a reasoned campaign. It is, however, necessary to grasp some idea of the strategy of the war, if the whole is not to appear a mere confusion and unrest, and the first main point to consider is the significance of London.

London was with the Parliament. It was so large and rich a city that it could provide the means for the raising of the troops. Not only was it able to furnish men and money, but it constituted a permanent base to which armies could retire for rest and re-formation, and also from which they could proceed. Again, it commanded the Thames crossing, sixty miles from the sea. Finally, and above all, the capital was too large a place for the King with his small force ever to attempt to capture or subdue. It was a pro-

position altogether too large for the force at his disposal, as he well knew. In this respect London stood by itself. It was perfectly safe for the Parliament, and London was supported by Kent and by East Anglia, the counties of the Williams, or, as they preferred to call themselves later, the Cromwells.

Now the King had no such stronghold or nest as London, in which he could reorganize and recuperate. He had the north and the Severn Valley, but they were not solid for him as London was solid for Parliament. They contained a greater proportion of Royalists than did the rest of England; that was all. But Charles had no such permanent base as his opponents and on that very account he was to suffer severely. Among the Royalists, it is interesting to note that the proportion of Catholics was remarkably high; among the cavalry, they numbered about half the total. The reason is not far to seek. Though they had little to thank Charles for, they had nothing whatever for which to thank the Parliament, and a Parliamentary victory would leave their case far worse than it found it.

Of the general character of the fighting, a wrong impression has often been conveyed. It has been suggested that the Parliamentary cavalry "swept the Cavaliers before them from Marston Moor to Naseby."[1] The idea has been encouraged that the strength of the Parliamentary cavalry overwhelmed the Royalists from start to finish. The impression is totally incorrect. Cavalry was Charles's strong arm, and had the fighting been only cavalry fighting, Charles would probably have won. The Cavaliers, led by Rupert, as a rule swept their mounted opponents off the field. But the King's cavalry was without support. It was the counter-charge of the Parliamentary troops that generally prevailed, and for a reason that strikes at the root of Charles's trouble. The counter-charge prevailed because of the King's weakness, and in-

[1] H. G. Wells' *Outline of History*—a summary of the historians of the nineteenth century.

creasing weakness as time went on, in the quality of his infantry. The Parliament was not weak in footmen because they could afford to pay for them. But Charles could not afford to pay for a strong body of infantry. He had to rely on badly-trained, poorly-disciplined and numerically weak Welsh foot-soldiers. They grew weaker as the King lacked money, and when they broke the central monarchy broke too. It was that weak link upon which Charles had ultimately to rely, and it was weak because he was poor. His cavalry, on the other hand, was largely composed of loyal and devoted volunteers—and a great part of it, possibly a full half, was Catholic. His cavalry rallied round him, but his infantry he had to hire. It was his undoing.

The Civil War divides itself into two fairly clear parts.[1] The first phase lasted, approximately, two years and although not decisive, was, in the main, favourable to the King. It ended, however, disastrously, with the defeat of Marston Moor. The second phase opens after Marston Moor with the reconstruction of the Parliamentary army (under their fine cavalry leader, Cromwell) and ends after a second period of another two years with the capture of Oxford, the King's headquarters, 20th June, 1646.

The Civil War opened with Charles at Nottingham and under him an army of about 6,000 men. At Northampton, three days' march from Charles, lay Essex, with about 15,000 men. Essex's army thus stretched between the King and London, in the line of any advance. The smallness of the King's force made the suggestion of any such advance impossible and Charles, therefore, with sound judgment, moved off towards the west, up the valley of the Trent, and so to Shrewsbury. Gathering strength as he marched, for the recruits were now pouring in, he found himself in Shrewsbury at the head of some 18,000 men. He now thought himself strong enough to attempt the march on London, the more so as he hoped to swell his army on the way.

[1] See *Warfare in England*, by Hilaire Belloc.

Meanwhile, the march of the King in a westerly direction being realized by Essex at Northampton, the Parliamentary general set out westward himself. He aimed at Worcester, cutting the Severn Valley, thinking that the purpose of Charles was to hold the Severn line. The next news discovered for him his mistake, and he learned that in reality Charles was heading for London. He set off rapidly in pursuit of the King and his army.

The knowledge that Charles was advancing on the capital struck terror to the heart of London. There was, for a moment, panic and confusion among the Parliamentarians. Urgent orders were sent to Essex to intercept the King. But the Parliamentary general had already failed to intercept Charles and was at the present following hotly in his footsteps, hoping to catch him up. London need not have worried about the coming of the King. Charles could not possibly have taken or held it. Had he attempted with his small force to hold down the vast metropolis, he would merely have failed miserably and the Civil War would have ended sooner than it did. London's size and great population had served to save it from many a siege and capture for centuries before Charles came up against it. In fact, the extent of London and its population had been a determining factor in many of the wars of the Middle Ages.

As it happened, the swift moving Parliamentary army came in contact with their enemy on the 22nd October at Edge Hill. The Royal army had just concluded its day's march. It turned round to face Essex, and on the following day was fought the battle of Edge Hill, the first battle of the Civil War. It was not a decisive engagement. The Royal army, though superior in numbers and in position, lacked the necessary experience to gain battles, else they could not have failed to gain the day. Rupert's cavalry wasted its opportunity by prolonging the pursuit of the broken Parliamentary line. The Royalists dissipated time and strength through not knowing

how best to use them, and Essex was able to withdraw his forces from the fight and to fall back on Warwick. It was the King's victory and he was now free to march without hindrance on London. But, in the military sense, the battle was a failure, for he had not put his enemy out of action. Essex's force was not destroyed, but was soon in a position to take the field again.

The King now lost the fruits of his recent victory by the slowness with which he resumed his march upon London. But eighty miles or so from the capital,[1] it took him no less than three weeks to reach the neighbourhood of London. He drew near to the metropolis with the utmost deliberation, or reluctance, delaying at Oxford, and yet again at Reading, for no military reason whatsoever, wasting precious time with the winter coming upon him. And while he thus delayed, Essex had come down from Warwick and entered the capital, while Windsor and two other posts between that and London were held for the Parliament.

It was just at this point that the Parliament began to put out feelers towards peace. It sounds astonishing, but it is true. The march of the King towards London, deliberate though it was, had profoundly disturbed the people and their defenders. But what really influenced the Parliament was the strength of feeling that they discovered in the people for the King. The people were soaked in the monarchial tradition and looked upon the Parliamentary opposition to the hereditary King as treason, and simply as such. The central monarchy was a part of England and the people did not understand the meaning of an army raised against it. It was not even a question of succession, as had been even the most doubtful phases of the wars of the usurpers that originally established the Tudors. The opposition to the King was at this stage really alarmed, anyway. Negotiations for peace were entered into at Colnbrook,

[1] A march with a large army of about six days at the utmost.

but a breach of faith on the part of the Parliamentary negotiators caused them abruptly to be broken off. Charles, considerably annoyed by the event, resumed his march and, eventually, arrived before London. But though he reached the gates of the metropolis, it was evident that his small army was quite incapable of taking it. The proposition was one that it could not tackle. The numbers that Essex was able to oppose to Charles made the task of taking, or even laying siege to, the city frankly impossible. At Turnham Green a force of some 24,000 men opposed the King for one long day, at the end of which Charles was forced to turn his back upon London. It was merely a question of size. Let it be repeated, London was too big for Charles to take. He turned back to Reading and then continued his journey till he reached Oxford. From this point, Oxford became his headquarters and remained the centre of the Royalist movement for the rest of the war.

The main body of the Royalists now lay at Oxford, watched from a distance by Essex's army, that lay through the spring and summer of 1643 at the foot of the Chilterns. But fighting on a small scale was going on all over England and two special Royalist armies of considerable size were engaged in working out a large plan that, if successful, would lead to a victory for Charles. One of the Cavalier armies was moving in the north, under Newcastle, whose purpose it was to conquer Yorkshire for the King. The intention was to march slowly and victoriously south and to effect a junction with the King's army at Oxford. The second army was in the west, under Prince Maurice, Charles's nephew, and its purpose was to advance east and north, conquering as it marched and, in due course, this army too was to join the King's main force at Oxford. With victory thus north and west, with the consequent gain of public opinion that such victory must carry with it, with the increased forces that success must inevitably afford him, it was the King's purpose to march once more on

London. It was hoped that his superiority in the field would be then so securely established that the capital would not hesitate to receive the King.

The success of the plan turned on the complete triumph of the armies acting north and west, but in the event their successes were only partial. In the north the movement started well. Fairfax, the Parliamentary general in that area, was pushed back across Yorkshire and finally confined to the strip of land between the Humber and the sea, covering, however, the military depot at Hull. But Fairfax, having been brushed aside, the way was found by no means open for the Royalist army to reach Oxford. The East Anglian lands were solid for the Parliament. It was the "Cromwell" district, and thus the Parliamentary influence was so strong in that area that it was able to extend itself beyond, to the county of Lincolnshire. The strength of the Parliament below Lincolnshire was sufficient—thanks mainly to the wealth and importance of the Cromwell family—to raise Lincolnshire against the King. Now Lincoln controlled the communications between Oxford and Yorkshire, and what with the interruption to their lines and the unexpected resistance that was encountered in Lincoln, the Duke of Newcastle was not able to push forward and complete his success. Fairfax, moreover, became once again active as the situation changed to the King's disadvantage, and the autumn of 1643 found the northern force of the Royalists unable to effect a joining with the main army at Oxford. The result of the northern campaign, then, was success on the Yorkshire plains but failure to achieve its end.

In the west the Royalist success was more overwhelming, but still, even here, it was not complete. The Parliamentary general in the western district was Waller, and he sustained a heavy defeat at the hands of the Royalists, just outside Bath (on Lansdown Hill, near the present race-course). A few days later, however, Waller was again in the field attempting

to hold the Royalist force at Devizes. While thus occupied, the Royalist general, Wilmot, who had marched down from Oxford with a small force, fell upon him and the Parliamentary army in the west was broken to pieces. In the same month, news was received that Prince Rupert, the King's nephew, had captured Bristol, and by autumn the western army of the Royalists had united with the central body at Oxford, leaving the west more or less declared for the King.

The western army, then, had successfully carried out its allotted part of the plan—in all details save one. Though the west was generally Royalist in the autumn of 1643, the town of Gloucester had not been taken, but remained an alien spot in the King's country garrisoned by a force of the Parliamentary soldiery. This exception of Gloucester to the general scheme or pattern of the west was to have far-reaching and disastrous results to Charles.

In the circumstances, and in order to complete the success of the western plan of campaign, it was determined to lay siege to the town of Gloucester. The siege accordingly began in August and lasted through the month, the town holding out stoutly. Charles has been criticized for wasting time and strength over the siege of Gloucester, instead of going ahead with his more ambitious plan which had its end at London. But the general military judgment is that he was right thus to make the attempt to cut out this cancer that otherwise marred the uniformity and solidity of the west. The cancer might spread, and the earlier successes in the district be jeopardized. In any case, he would have left a rallying point for his enemies if he had left Gloucester as it was. But whether it was a blunder or no, Charles did not hesitate to undertake the siege of Gloucester, and Essex with an army of 10,000 men marched out from London to its aid. He arrived early in September and the result of his coming was that the Royalists were compelled to raise the siege.

The alien spot in the Royalist country therefore remained. The King had failed to remove it, thereby proving his weakness. A Parliamentary garrison remained alive in the west, after Charles had attempted to kill it. It was a bad advertisement for the King's party, a good one for Parliament. Having achieved his purpose, Essex marched back towards London, chancing upon the retreating Royal army at Newbury. A confused action followed, from which neither side was able to extract a victory, and the Parliamentary force continued its journey to London, while Charles proceeded to Oxford. Thus ended the fighting for the year 1643.

The year 1644 opened with two new elements introduced into the situation. The Parliament made an alliance with the Scotch and before the end of January, a Scotch force had crossed the border against the King. Secondly, the Royal forces that had been employed in Ireland during the late religious trouble were now brought over to aid Charles in England. Little aid they gave him. They landed in Flint and proceeded to Nantwich, where a small Parliamentary garrison was stationed. Fairfax was sent up against them from Yorkshire. He relieved the siege of Nantwich, but he did more. He destroyed the newly-arrived army from Ireland and, if the story is true, induced the broken units to take service under the Parliament in his own army. The defeat of the troops from Ireland occurred upon the same day that the Scotch crossed the border,

The position had now changed with bewildering rapidity. Fairfax and his army stood between the northern forces of the King and the main Royalist army at Oxford. But the northern army was itself caught between two fires, since Fairfax was just below them, and the Scotch were advancing upon them from the north. To north and to south their opponents stood. To make a demonstration, Rupert and his cavalry got busy and by some fine actions, extended the King's sway in the north-west, but it was plain

that the original plan of the northern army uniting with the main army at Oxford must be given up. Events had prevented the necessary general concentration at Oxford, which was to have been the pivot of new action. Gloucester still prevented the west from being completely held for the King, and the force in the north, which should long since have joined him at Oxford, was now in great danger from two sides at once.

The northern army under Newcastle, menaced by the nearing Scotch, took refuge in the town from which the Duke received his name, and the Scotch immediately proceeded to besiege it. After a three weeks' siege, the Scotch tired of their task, for the town remained untaken, and they continued their march southwards. The Duke of Newcastle at once came out of the town and set out to follow them. The Scotch coming upon Fairfax, joined forces with him and turned round to face Newcastle's army. This new combination of enemies forced the northern Royalists to throw themselves into the town of York. The Parliament thereupon ordered Manchester, with a force of 14,000 men, to join with Fairfax and the Scotch in the field, for the purpose of taking York and putting the King's northern army out of action. Newcastle, realizing that Charles's fate in the north hung by a slender thread, sent urgently to the King for help. But the army at Oxford was not in a position to supply assistance. It was itself engaged in eluding the Parliamentary armies. Rupert was, nevertheless, in the north-west, and Charles ordered him to march without delay upon York, to raise the siege and save the north. He set off across the Pennines. On the last day of June the Parliamentary leaders (and rivals), Manchester and Cromwell, learned that Prince Rupert was but a day's march from York. They thereupon raised the siege and retired a distance of five miles beyond the city walls. On the first day of the second half of the year Rupert and his cavalry marched into the city of York and the two Royalist forces were joined.

The situation now was that two large forces lay within striking distance of one another. The combined northern force of Rupert and Newcastle numbered something less than 25,000 men. The Parliamentary and the Scotch force, on the other hand, was approximately the same size, possibly a little larger. It was obviously the duty of each side to endeavour to snatch a victory that should decide the fortunes of the north. A Royalist victory would deliver the north from the shadow of the Parliament and enable the forces to march south and effect a junction with Charles. But a Parliamentary victory would put the King's northern army out of the war and cut off the monarch from the northern half of his kingdom. It was a throw that would determine much and one which neither army could afford to neglect.

On the day after his arrival at York, Rupert and Newcastle marched out to meet their enemy. It was at Marston Moor that the two armies met, some five miles distant from York. For the second half of the long summer's day the two armies watched one another, without a movement taking place on either side. Each waited on the other. Towards the close of the day, as no attack had been delivered, the Royalists concluded that no Parliamentary action was intended until the following day. Rupert was already calling for the evening meal, and many of his officers had dismounted when the Parliamentary commander set his cavalry in motion. It was near sunset that Cromwell charged.

There were four separate movements in the battle that followed that evening, but the last one was decisive. In the first place Rupert's horse was defeated by Cromwell's first charge. They fell back, with the Parliamentary horse in hot pursuit. In the second place the Scotch, on the opposite wing, were equally defeated by the Royalist horse. They broke and were pursued. Thirdly, the Parliamentary infantry crumbled before the Royalist attack. At

this point the balance was on the side of the Cavaliers. Their left wing was routed, but everywhere else they were successful. Then came the fourth movement, a blow that recovered the situation from the Parliamentary point of view, and that decided the battle of Marston Moor. Cromwell's cavalry turned from the pursuit of Rupert and charged the successful Royalists in the flank. That last charge in the gathering gloom was the decisive stroke that finished the battle in favour of the Parliament. But it meant more than the success of a single engagement. It meant that the Great Rebellion had succeeded.

It was Cromwell's victory, the victory of his new cavalry. He had seen and seized the secret whereby cavalry might be made the decisive weapon in the war. He had trained his new horsemen to move as a single horseman, to act as a machine. The old method had been for the cavalry to charge and to pursue, but Cromwell learned how to bring the pursuers back, not as a rabble, but in line, prepared for the next charge. It was this "next charge" that decided Marston Moor, and also Naseby. Fifteen hundred prisoners were taken after the battle and, likewise, all the Royalist guns. And when darkness fell not only was the fate of the north sealed, but also the fate of the King. But with the battle of Marston Moor the first part of the Civil War ended.

The second part of the Civil War may be termed the period of the recovery of the west by the Parliament. Charles's great plan had failed. To extend his victory from the west to the north, uniting the two at Oxford, and with the renewed support of his success behind him, to presss on to the capital had been his intention, but the disaster of Marston Moor upset the possibility of the scheme ever being brought to a successful conclusion. The initial plan of spreading the Royalist influence over the northern area had finally broken down.

The result of Marston Moor was that the King's action must now be confined to the west. His freedom

of movement was checked. He could form no real offensive plans, for the initiative had passed to the other side. It was more than he could do to defend what might be considered the Royalist gains. The next move was taken by the Parliament, or at least by one of its generals, and an extraordinary move it was. A month after Marston Moor, Essex marched his army right down into Cornwall. It was an inexplicable march, for it served no military purpose, and it ended in overwhelming disaster. Essex simply marched out straight into the west, or enemy country, and was destroyed. So curious was this move of Essex that he was suspected of treason to his side. The Royalists gathered behind him as he pressed forward, and by the time he had reached the sea, they had completely cut off his army. He was confined in a narrow area and had no choice but to capitulate. It was a great Royalist victory, as far as it went, but, largely accidental, it had no bearing on the general military situation. Besides raising the spirits of the Cavaliers, it served no purpose.

The object of the Parliament was now to wear down the King. His armies were limited in numbers, his recruiting field of the north was cut off, and his field of action curtailed. His armies depended on the supply of money he could command and that supply was running very low. They, on the other hand, could raise as many men as they wanted. The only limits were those they made for themselves. The control of the purse was never more evident. The big magnates, who had objected to the payment of " Ship Money ", made no complaint about paying out money for the maintenance of the Parliamentary armies. By the offer of exceptionally high wages they could recruit to what extent they pleased. Furthermore, the time factor was on their side, for time told heavily against Charles. Poor at the commencement of hostilities, he was poverty-stricken before the end, and the quality of his infantry grew almost daily weaker and more useless.

The Royalist forces wandered rather aimlessly about, in what was their own territory. In October they were once again in the neighbourhood of Newbury, but wherever they chanced to be the Parliamentary forces were never far distant. In October, then, the two came in contact at Newbury. The Parliamentary army was assembled in force, Cromwell amongst them, but although his troops greatly outnumbered the King's, they failed to crush him, and the second battle of Newbury ended as indecisively as the first had done.

But after the disaster that had befallen Essex in the west and the failure of the Parliamentary army at Newbury, a change came over the King's enemies. There was much friction in the army over the vital question of leadership. Two men were in the running for the supreme command, and two men cannot run an army successfully if they be in opposition, the one to the other. The two were Manchester and Cromwell. A series of political moves, that do not concern these pages, resulted in Manchester being dropped and Cromwell remaining alone in command. He was, of course, nominally under Fairfax, but Fairfax was only a mask, behind which the real leader acted. Cromwell made use of his new position to found the new standing army, which received the name of the New Model. About 20,000 men represented the New Model, a very highly paid and very strictly disciplined body. Cavalry composed one-third of this force, the famous cavalry that could advance and turn all together and as a single horseman. Two-thirds of the force was infantry, well fed, well trained infantry, and a thorough contrast with Charles's ill-equipped, untrained, and half-willing Welshmen.

It was to this New Model that the task of completing the exhaustion of Charles was given. The New Model was created indeed to bring the matter to a conclusion. At the end of April, 1645, it took the field. It was almost at the same time that the King found an ally in Scotland, the celebrated Montrose, who announced his adherence to the Stuart cause by a

series of successes in Scotland. The tidings of the unexpected victories in Scotland induced Charles to turn his own fatigued forces to the north. With an army of some 10,000 men he started out from Oxford, his base. Fairfax was ordered by Parliament to lead the New Model in pursuit. On their way up north the Royalists took the town of Leicester by assault, small as was their strength. Unwisely Charles left about 3,000 of the men he could ill spare to garrison the captured town, and himself continued the northern march with the remainder, 7,000 or so. Fairfax was hot in pursuit, and Charles turned round, swerving first to the east and then to the south. The King's scouting was bad. He was ill served with information, and he did not realize the danger in which he presently lay.

On the 14th of June, the two armies met. The Parliamentary force was concentrated at Naseby and there awaited the Royalist attack. Fairfax outnumbered the King by about two to one, which makes it difficult to understand why he should stand by, awaiting the attack of an inferior force. Nevertheless, wait he did, nor did the Cavaliers disappoint him. Why Charles should choose to attack in the circumstances is, likewise, difficult to understand. Not only had he left a portion of his command to garrison the town of Leicester, troops that would have been much better employed at Naseby, but he was also expecting reinforcements. Still, the Royalists delivered the attack, Rupert, a scarlet figure on his big black horse, leading the initial charge. The mere numbers of the Parliamentary army decided the day, before a blow could be struck, but it is, nevertheless, an amazing fact that there were times when Charles actually looked as if he were going to gain the victory. The Parliamentary general managed his part badly—but he managed to win. Rupert's Cavaliers roughly shook the Parliamentary horse on the left, but Cromwell on the right, bringing his own counter-charge to a halt and abandoning the usual follow-up, wheeled

his new cavalry to the left and destroyed the inefficient Welsh footmen that formed Charles's centre. The centre caved in. It was a decisive blow and to the Royalists crushing.

Naseby was the beginning of the end. After that defeat the Civil War burns itself out. There begins that long series of capitulations, as the towns in the west with their scattered and now unsupported garrisons one by one give way to the pressure of events and abandon the struggle for the King. Charles sought safety for a short period in Wales, and far away in Scotland the great effort of his lonely ally, Montrose, ended in crushing disaster (12th September).

The Civil War was over, the King could fight no more. His poverty could no longer cope with the plenitude of his opponents. Returning from the west, from point to point he led his diminishing band of faithful followers. A mere remnant of his original army went down outside Chester. His headquarters at Oxford were captured. Charles escaped in disguise and made his melancholy way north. There was by this time acute disagreement between those two allies, the Parliament and the Scotch, and it was made known to Charles that the Scotch, his own race, though his recent foes, would now welcome his appearance amongst them. It was a desperate step, but he went to them, and it seemed at first that he was well and courteously received. He was soon permitted to discover, however, that he was not an honoured guest, but a prisoner in the hands of the Scotch. A number of political complications followed, which resulted in his being handed over by his captors to the Parliament. The Scotch gained £200,000 by the transaction, and the Parliament the person of the King. He was taken to Holmby, in the vicinity of Northampton.

We shall not linger over the remaining events in the unfortunate King's life. From Holmby he was captured *from* the Parliament *by* the Army. It was Cromwell's move. The war over and the army still

at his command, Cromwell was in trim for other and bigger events. Firstly, he assured the House of Commons (and it is said, with real tears in his eyes) of his devotion to it, and his obedience to its authority. Secondly, he called a secret meeting by night at his house in Drury Lane, at which a certain Cornet Joyce was commissioned to seize the person of the King. Joyce, with a troop of horse, suddenly appeared at Holmby, without any other authority than his soldiers, and removed the King as his prisoner. Charles was first lodged at Hinchinbrook (in the "Cromwell" country) and then at a house near Cambridge. Following these important events the Army, or its leader, dissolved the Parliament, and Cromwell slowly took over the reins of government.

From Cambridge, Charles was transferred to Hampton Court, where he was allowed to see his children. But the captivity of the King was not to be of long duration. The Army could not hold him for long on any reasonable plea. It was either Charles or the Army, that is, Cromwell, who must survive. There was no room for a compromise. If Charles had won, the rebel leaders, Cromwell and the rest, were in danger. Since he had lost, it was Charles himself who was in danger. There was no place for him in England save on the throne. But in order that matters should look as black as possible against him, it was arranged that he should escape from Hampton Court. He was deceived into believing that there was a ship lying ready to take him over the seas. Charles was led, or misled, to Southampton Water where, of course, no such ship awaited him. He was induced by his guide to cross over to the Isle of Wight for safety, but as the Governor of the Island was one Hammond, a cousin of Cromwell's, there was no safety in that place for Charles, save the safety that might be granted to a prisoner in Carisbrooke Castle. The false escape only dragged Charles a step nearer his doom, for it was now represented that the King was attempting to fly from justice.

The history of the three years of the King's captivity is the history of England during the time that the despotism of the Army, or more directly of Cromwell, the leader of the victorious but rebellious lords, was being established. It was an England full of discord and confusion, an England in which an earthquake had just happened, and the common person did not know what to make of it. The Puritan party goes up with a bound, and Puritanism becomes the order of the day. Ritual disappears from the churches, as do many of the finer ornaments, and the words of the Jacobite Bible are to be heard on all sides, though to be sure the style of that translation was already slightly an anachronism when James had the thing done. Cromwell uses the biblical phrases well, and, compared with the more rabid of his followers, with restraint.

But the confusion in England does not come to a head, the general discontent is not expressed in action. The army, that splendid New Model, without its equal in Europe, is kept in being, Cromwell at its head. There can be no active expression of the nation's feelings while the army stands—inactive it is true, but only too ready for more action. But in this new order the King has no place. The central monarchy, that he had so nobly striven to uphold, has been broken down. Rooted though it is in the hearts of the people, they have seen it conquered by this new and unheard of thing, the Great Rebellion. The King has no part, we say, in this new order. Since it succeeded he is out of date. But still, while he remains alive, he is a rallying point, a centre, a focus. Within two years of his captivity the general discontent at that which has replaced the King is recognized as an alarming thing. The new order is not liked. The new order only rests on the army. There is a Royalist reaction. Public opinion, never very far from Charles, often only lazy or apathetic, is steadily veering round in his direction. In the eyes of the new governors of England, the King is a menace.

While he remains, something may happen—indeed, anything may happen. The safety of the new lords, Cromwell and the rest, depends on the King's death. Their whole position is founded on his deposal. If he ever recovers his position, then they are doomed. He must never recover his dignity. But if he disappears from the scene, then that rallying point, centre or focus of a Royalist resurrection must also disappear. The thing must, however, be accomplished with a show of legality—even though they mightily hate all forms of ritual—and so Charles must be brought to a trial. A trial duly takes place and the King is sentenced to death. And when he speaks, he avers stoutly, that he dies for the people of England; as indeed he does.

Execution followed speedily upon the sentence.

The King was at St. James's. He spent the day, it was a Sunday, devotionally in the company of Dr. Juxon, Bishop of London. It must be noted to the credit of the Puritan fanatics that the King enjoyed the attendance of the Bishop just before his death. During the day several noblemen presented themselves to pay their last respects to their sovereign, but in his name they were thanked for their devotion and their prayers were asked. The shortness of the time allowed him by his judges to linger on earth made the hours precious to Charles, and that time he divided between his devotions and his children. The children whom he saw were two, the Princess Elizabeth and his tiny son, the Duke of Gloucester. He spoke to them in terms suitable to their years, divided a few jewels between them and they left him for ever.

On the last night of his life he slept soundly, but was awakened early. He dressed with more than usual care. He ordered two shirts to be provided for his use—"For," said he, "were I to shake through cold, my enemies would attribute it to fear." He spent some time in privacy with the bishop, but about ten o'clock Hacker announced that the time had come to proceed to Westminster. He was taken there on foot,

between two detachments of the military, across the park. There was a meal prepared, but he refused it. A glass of wine he permitted himself to drink. There was then a delay of two hours before the last summons came.

About two o'clock in the afternoon the fatal order was given. Charles was conducted through the long gallery of that house at Westminster that was to have been his father's new palace, but which was never completed through lack of money. The gallery was lined with soldiers. At the end he stepped through a hole in the wall, beyond which the scaffold had been erected. It was a short cut to the block, for the people were still feared. The scaffold was hung with black and at the farther end stood the executioners, before them the block and the axe. Below the scaffold was drawn up the army, several regiments of horse and foot, and beyond that, the people—despised yet feared. The King stood collected and undismayed, as his royal grandmother had stood in the hall at Fotheringay so many years before. The strange dignity of the Stuarts was conspicuous now as then. He wished to address the people, but they had been cunningly confined beyond reach of his voice. They only saw the tall regal figure, his face grown old, the sharp-pointed beard, and the cloak dark and long, upon the left shoulder of which blazed the great Star of the Garter. Nevertheless he spoke, and the army heard him. He concluded his last speech thus: "Sirs, it was for the liberties of the people that I am come here. If I would have assented to an arbitrary sway, to have all things changed according to the power of the sword, I need not have come hither. And therefore I tell you (and I pray God it be not laid to your charge) that I am the martyr of the people."

He then bent his neck to the low block and after a short pause, during which the new clock on Whitehall Gate struck the hour, he stretched forth his hands as a signal that he was ready. The waiting people saw the axe flash out, a white arc against the leaden

sky, and the King was dead. The King of England was dead. After more than six hundred years the popular monarchy was no more.

The group on the scaffold closed around the royal corpse, a cloth was thrown over the body and it was raised, the aged Juxon lending a trembling hand. A deep moan, queer yet fearful, rose from the people and in a moment the motionless soldiers came to life. From the north and from the south the cavalry charged, right through the crowd, hacking and dispersing the London mob in all directions. With no more ceremony than as if they had been a collection of slaves, were these Londoners driven from the scene of death. Dusk fell early that short winter's day, and with the dusk came small flakes of snow from the black sky, snow that did not melt, but lay upon the frozen ground.

. . . . . .

The King was dead and the Great Rebellion had triumphed. The tragedy of the Stuarts continued. A second had found swift death at the hand of the executioner. But it was the big lords who had gained the victory, and we have just seen in what manner their army dealt with the people. It has been repeated, perhaps over-repeated, in these pages that the contest that has just concluded was one between the central power and what it stood for, and the big lords and landowners, whose fortunes were founded on the spoil of the Church, and what they desired to stand for. It has been thus over-emphasized in this place because the point has been obscured in the official text-books of this country. Charles may have been perfectly wrong, and yet he was defending the rights of the throne and the liberties of the people. The big magnates, whose voice was the Parliament, may have been perfectly right, and yet they were usurping the rights of the King and of his people. To see the struggle as one between Autocracy on the one side and Democracy on the other, is not to see it at all.

It is bad history, because it is false perspective. It is reading twentieth century ideas into seventeenth century events. It is neglecting the truth and one neglected and forgotten piece of truth (out of a thousand such) may be gathered, not from the statue of John Hampton in Aylesbury Market Place, but from the writings of Hampton. He has written: "If it were not for their reiterated cry about religion they (the Parliament) would never have been sure of keeping the people on their side." In other words, unless Parliament sounded a false note and misled the people as to the reason for the struggle with the King, the people would have fought not with them, but against them.

IV

KINGS IN EXILE

Upon the death of Charles I, the office of kingship was abolished in England by the Commons. The King was dead and they were not going to add, long live the king. The tragic story of the Stuarts had taken a new turn. No longer was their misfortune confined to England. For the next ten years they were to carry it up and down Europe. At the end of that period the House of Stuart was to be recalled to England, considerably to its surprise. But it remains doubtful whether the greater tragedy was the exile of Charles I's sons, after his defeat by the Great Rebellion, or the Restoration that brought them both back to England, amid the delirious cheers of the populace, in 1660.

The two sons of Charles Stuart in whom we are interested here were Charles, the eldest son, and James. Charles, the Prince of Wales, was born in 1630, James in 1633. The King had kept them about him in the earlier days of the Civil War. They had been present at the unfurling of the Standard at Nottingham, and had been with their father in the first battle, at Edge Hill. They saw the King go off to his battles and they saw him return, with victory one day, but without it the next. Though Charles's judgment was often unsound, his instincts were generally right. The instinct that made him fight in the field for the popular monarchy was a right instinct, although the judgment used in the contest was frequently at fault. It was similarly a sound instinct that, as early as 1645, told him that the war must go against him in the long run. The Royalists might be deluded into

dreams of conquest by deeds of valour, but the King was not so deluded. Four years before his death, he saw the inevitable ending to the prolonged struggle. He saw his ultimate defeat, yet he did not desert his post. He led his miserable remnant of an army forward to what he knew must be fresh disaster, but though this course carried him to his ruin, he did not neglect to provide for his successor. Charles might die, but the Stuarts must live.

His anxiety for the safety of his heir led him to send his eldest son away. He sent him first out to the west country in the company of some of his most trusted advisers.[1] The young prince was nominally in command of Bristol. But as the Parliamentary armies gained ground in the west country, so the prince was forced to retreat. Fairfax advanced, and the heir receded. By March, 1646, he was compelled to seek safety outside England, removing himself, first to the Scilly Isles, and secondly, the following month, to Jersey. From Jersey he was summoned to France by his mother, who did not fail to remind him that it was his father's wish that he should obey her commands. On the 26th of June, 1646, the Prince, now in his sixteenth year, sailed for France from Jersey, and thus it was that nearly three years before the death of Charles I, his son was an exile.

To follow the wanderings of the unhappy heir during the years he was kept out of his kingdom would be a task beyond the limits of this work. A few general observations of the nature of the exile and a more exact outline of Prince Charles's Scotch campaign that overflowed into England, but was finally dammed (or damned) at Worcester, must serve.

The fugitive Prince found himself during the years that are most vital to the formation of character among strangers, all the supports upon which he had

[1] They included Edward Hyde, later to be known as Lord Clarendon, who has left so interesting, yet inaccurate, a record of his times, behind him.

been reared to rely, broken, and, moreover, deprived of his natural counsellors. The news he received from England during the first years of his wandering was uniformly bad news. Those black years for the Royalists in England carried their echo across the seas. Disaster followed disaster as the Royal army crumbled to pieces and the Parliamentary army closed in upon the King. The only news was that of the King's losses, of the terrible New Model, slowly advancing now to its inevitable victory, of the King's flight to the Scotch, and of their treachery in handing over their guest to the Parliament.

The tale of the Royalist reaction, too, was one long tale of tragedy. The spasmodic risings all over England, each in turn put down with much severity, each incurring the deaths of more loyal followers—upon such tidings did the son of the King grow to manhood. Now would the fugitives arrive to tell him (say) of the unauthorized insurrection in Kent that ruined Lord Holland's plans, of how the untrained mob fell an easy prey to Fairfax and his veterans, and of how the routed remnant fled into Essex. They threw themselves into Colchester, Lucas, Listle and the rest, and after a short but terrible siege the castle was surrendered. It was on this occasion that the character of Fairfax sustained a blot that it had hitherto lacked, for he allowed feelings of revenge to show themselves in his work.

Again would be brought to the Prince's ears the story of Lord Holland's unsuccessful attempt to secure the city of London. The city was finding the new regime profoundly distasteful, yet it failed to rise to the occasion and Holland and the young Duke of Buckingham were completely routed at Kingston-on-Thames. The affair is chiefly memorable for the valiant death of Francis Villiers, Buckingham's younger brother. His horse being killed under him, he leapt to the ground, and backing against an elm tree wielded his sword in a great circle, dealing out death with high spirit. Wounded in nine places

he fought gallantly on until one, creeping in from behind the tree, dealt him a blow from the back, and he fell in a crumpled heap.

Such tales of heroism and horror, or disaster and despair, served to keep the Prince alive to the state of affairs in England, and, meantime, he was busy plotting rescues of his father and devising schemes of attack, none of which had any chance of success.

The only good news during all these early years was that which told of the escape of his brother, James. James, Duke of York, had been left at the King's headquarters at Oxford, at the time that Charles definitely abandoned the city to its fate. James has left a record telling how, after the cause was ruined, his father had intended to take the Duke of York with him to share his fate, but upon second thoughts decided to leave him within the town. The boy, he was but thirteen years old, was thus shut up with the Royal garrison at Oxford, having seen his doomed father ride away when the Parliamentarians came knocking at the gate. Oxford surrendered in June, 1646. The lad thus came into personal contact with his father's enemies. Some showed him respect; some did not. Cromwell was among those who did, kissing his hand and carrying himself with extra deference. Cromwell had not yet fully declared his mind. Until the right moment came, it was his policy still to have a foot in the Royalist camp.

Thus James became a prisoner, and he was to remain so for nearly two years. He was taken to London and lodged at St. James's, under the keeping of Lord Northumberland. St. James's Palace then stood by itself, with fields and a park on different sides. Plots to rescue the Duke were frequently made by Royalist friends. Two had been discovered when a third succeeded, and the third succeeded through the game of hide and seek. A fortnight before the date agreed upon to attempt this escape, there was started by the young Duke of York, with

his little sister and brother, Princess Elizabeth and the tiny Duke of Gloucester (also prisoners at St. James's) a series of games of hide and seek, that lasted from morning to night. They were games that everyone at the Palace knew about and, ultimately, indeed were led to expect. James, writing of these games in his old age, boasts pleasantly of the skill with which he was wont to hide himself, and tells how, after letting them seek him for about half an hour on end, he would give himself up. When the right day for his escape arrived (it was the 20th April, 1648), about dusk the merry game of hide and seek was being busily carried on. James went away to hide himself—only he was not again found in England. The game aptly succeeded, for, while he was being hurried away by his friends, his gaolers, under the impression that he was but concealed from his little brother and sister, made no attempt even to look for him. By the time they concluded that he really was missing, and grew alarmed, it was already night, and James was well on his way.

Meantime, James had secured the key of the Close (or Spring Gardens) from the gardener. He had given out that he intended to go hunting in the morning at an early hour, and wanted the keys overnight. It may be that the gardener believed him or, on the other hand, that, like most of the common people, his sympathies were with the royal party. At any rate, James received the keys, and while it was thought by his keepers that he was engaged in play with his sister and brother, at nine o'clock he unlocked the door of the Close and stood outside in the black, moonless night. Not long did he stand, for waiting for him was Colonel Dampfield. Dampfield placed a bandage across his face, concealing the Duke's nose and one eye, and giving him the appearance of one who had met with an accident. Leading him thus disguised to a waiting carriage, the Colonel took him quickly to one of the public stairs by the riverside. They then drifted down the tide to a house in the

neighbourhood of London Bridge. There James was dressed up as a girl, put on board another boat and, with Dampfield, taken along to Greenwich.

On this second craft the runaway Duke received his first check, for the master judged it better to anchor before reaching Greenwich, since the wind was rising The fugitives, however, felt that their safety, perhaps their lives, depended upon going forward with all speed. Probably they were right. Though only Charles, the King, was put to death, it is exceedingly likely that his sons would have shared his fate in the end, had the Parliament obtained possession of them. Such was certainly King Charles's own opinion. At any rate, Colonel Dampfield considered that delay was more than dangerous, and in urging the necessity of speed upon the master of the vessel, he was discomfited to learn that that individual really refused to make Greenwich because he had discovered, or guessed, whom it was that he had taken on board. Through a crack in the door, he had seen the supposed girl remove the Order of the Garter which he wore, and knowing that girls did not wear such honours and only very few men were entitled to them, he put two and two together and made the answer the Duke of York.

When Dampfield spoke to him earnestly about the vital necessity for the young lady getting to Holland, therefore, he joked pleasantly about Garters. James heard, and the young son of the King acted swiftly. Without more ado he boldly informed the seaman that he was Charles I's son. There was no need to offer the master further encouragement. With the common people the Monarchy was still popular. There was no more difficulty about getting to Greenwich. The ship went on to pass through the gap in the boom that had been set across the river. It would seem, likewise, to have escaped the notice of the watch on the shore.

James was put ashore at Tilbury. The most difficult part of the adventure was passed, but there were yet

hours of anxiety to be endured. A Dutch vessel had been provided for his escape. He went aboard during the night. They must then wait for the morning tide. It was after daylight before they were moving. None appeared to hinder them, however, and the advantage of the wind was with them. They slid along on the open sea, and James reached the Hague in safety. He was met by his sister, the Princess of Orange. He also saw his brother, Charles. A summons from his mother, Henrietta Maria, called him to Paris. He set out, halting on his journey at the Abbey of St. Armande. It was while he remained there that his father was killed in London. He did not learn the fatal tidings until he reached Paris. His brother, then, whom he had just left in Holland, was now King. James's obedience was hereafter to his brother, or rather, to his King. From the moment of learning the news, he became Charles II's most loyal subject. There were, moreover, times when it must have seemed to the rather cynical new King that his brother James was his only subject.

The blow had fallen. The King, their father, was dead, killed by his own wealthy subjects and in his own country. Henceforth the whole battle for the Monarchy must devolve on these two men, James and Charles, exiles themselves, and stricken with dire poverty—beggars wandering about the courts of Europe looking for assistance. The sad news was conveyed to Charles in Holland by one who called him "Your Majesty." Quickly perceiving the point, he burst into tears. It is probable that they had not believed in the possibility of their father being put to death (or murdered, as they would have expressed it themselves) until the thing happened. They were accustomed to look on Charles as the Soldier-King leading his loyal subjects against the rebels. That the rebels had him in custody was one thing, but that the sacrilege of killing a King should be attempted, was another thing altogether. That it should be successful was bewildering. From this

moment there came a hardening in the characters of the two young men, and they were very young men. In Charles, the hardness showed itself in his later life in irony and in wit, but in James the hardening process was one that narrowed and concentrated his mind until he knew but one or at most two purposes in life.

The first task of the young men was that of readjusting their minds to the new conditions. Charles was now King, though he was in strange lands and in poverty. These two represented the Stuart line that had its roots in antiquity, and the task clearly before them was that of restoring their name and their dignity before the world at large. They must never forget what black injustice had been done to their name, and they must see that no one else did. Their enemy, too, was as clearly discernible, and Charles, later, in Paris, offered a reward for the head of Cromwell.

The two most obvious points about Charles and James, when they began the first of the Stuart exiles in Europe (and there were to be several such) were their poverty and their followers. If Charles, the King of England, had been handicapped and ruined on account of his lack of means, and his father, James I, sent soured to the grave for the same reason, while each was in possession of the customary kingly dues, how much worse was the poverty that the Princes felt when they roamed at large about Europe, filled with expensive projects for the restoration of the English monarchy and without any dues at all? Kings without thrones or incomes, they were looking for means, and it is not surprising that they roamed considerably during this time. They were not encouraged to make prolonged stays, since their object could not but be an embarrassment to the various rulers at whose cities and courts they presented themselves. But even if the object of raising large sums of money was one that might be endured, it was quite another matter for any ruler to be asked to endure their followers. Make no mistake about these followers.

The Cavalier adherents were often gallant fellows, who had suffered much in the cause of Royalty. Those who had escaped with their lives, had only done so at the cost of their pockets. They had given themselves for the King, and their estates—where they had any, and in the case of Catholics these estates had diminished year by year during the last three reigns—remained behind in the hands of the Parliament. They were a penniless crew surrounding a penniless and throneless monarch. Not only had they no money, but they had nothing to do; no way in which to fill in their time. When they had finished fighting for the late King they became like Othello, his occupation gone. Furthermore, everything they had suffered or had to suffer, they might claim was incurred in the King's service, and the result of the whole business had been death to their King, destruction to their cause, and disaster to themselves. To some of these needy Royalist exiles, the fires through which they had passed had brought an increasing spirit of recklessness, to others an increasing bitterness and depression. They were, in fact, in a likely situation to quarrel with anyone who gave them the least provocation, and that provocation lacking on the part of the stranger, the exiles were not unequal to discovering it amongst themselves. They were men who had nothing more to lose and little to look forward to: dangerous men.

No state could be expected to welcome a company of men who came with empty purses, but with ready swords; a company of half-trained, or amateur, soldiers whose cause having failed, were looking for a fresh one and finding it in the taverns and market-places of foreign cities. These loyal followers were a source of real trouble to Charles II, and all the more so in that, in a sense, they were necessary to him. They were the nucleus of that army that he must gather for his conquest, and whenever he needed a man, he had not far to look for a faithful one. But they, nevertheless, made his stay in any particular

city a very delicate matter, both for the new King and for the magistrate of that city. And it was quite early in the period of the Royal exile that the loyalists showed the world of Europe what might be expected from them.

It was May, 1649, and Charles II, as his followers knew him, though his enemies preferred such titles as "Chief Malignant," was resident in Holland, guest of the Prince of Orange and his wife. The commercial men of England, but particularly of London, were at the time acutely concerned about their mercantile communications with Holland. They urgently desired peace between the two countries, principally because they saw in peace, prosperity. The English Parliament, therefore, sent over an envoy to negotiate for a treaty with the United Provinces. The man whom they chose for their purpose was a Dr. Isaac Dorislaus, a Dutchman by birth, and therefore useful in such a business, but one who had long resided in England. He had, moreover, been Judge-Advocate of Essex's army *and had acted as prosecuting counsel at the trial of the late King.* That the English Parliament showed little tact in the selecting of their representative, it is not necessary to add. With such a record as his and with the Hague swarming with English and Scottish loyalists, it is eminently clear that his life was in considerable danger. He was, in fact, warned on his arrival of the peril in which he stood, but the warning went, apparently, unheeded. One evening, as Dorislaus was sitting at supper at his inn, six men entered with drawn swords in their hands. They coolly requested the company to sit still and reassured them with the information that they intended no harm to any, save the regicide. So saying, one of their number—it was Whitford, a son of the Bishop of Brechin—casually, almost carelessly, ran Dorislaus through the body with his blade. The task having been accomplished, the six swordsmen took their departure, with as much leisure and as little commotion as they had entered.

The Dutch people hailed the deed with joy, but Charles II was much disturbed and troubled, seeing, not only that a guest who numbered followers of this sort among his train could scarcely expect a prolonged welcome, but also that the incident probably represented the first of a series of such. The States were bound to express their resentment of the murder of an envoy on their own territory, though the populace might cheer. The result was, of course, that the King was asked to go. Very gently was the request made and no pains were spared to avoid hurting Charles's feelings; but there it was.

The above incident has only been mentioned in order to show the possibilities of the crowd that accompanied Charles on his exile. It was this crew that moved about near the King, and he was frequently judged by their actions. Still, it must be insisted that they were ultimately brave men, but men who had lost their roots. The standards by which they had once been in the habit of judging and regulating their lives, had been scrapped by their opponents in England. It was the successful rebellion that introduced new standards and broke old laws. It was the Parliament that took on itself the task of altering and transforming to suit itself. These Royalists were only doing in a small way, what the successful landowners in England were doing in a large way. The Lords killed the King; the Royalists killed Dorislaus.

Charles, then, found himself stranded on the Continent and his chief aim as a guest of the courts of Europe was to secure money for future adventures. Such a guest could not be universally popular. Moreover, he had a set of followers who were, in a word, a nuisance.

A word should be said about the mother of the new King and his brother, the doubly unfortunate Henrietta Maria. It will be remembered how the beautiful little Princess was brought over to England by the first Buckingham to be the wife of the King

of three kingdoms. Her idea on the subject of kingship had been formed on the solid pattern of the French central monarchy, and when she came to England she expected to see the same kind of organization in working. It was not long before she discovered the real situation, and that the King of three kingdoms was the ruler of none of them. Her further shock of surprise was occasioned by the recognition of the fact that Charles I was quite unable, even if he were willing, to carry out the promises made to France for the relief of Catholics. On points of religion, indeed, the two had nothing in common. Charles was a rigid Protestant, in the English sense, and in that faith he lived and died. Furthermore, it was the faith he recommended to his children in his last word to them. Henrietta Maria was a confirmed Catholic, and never varied in her attachment to that faith. As their married life continued, their great agreement, or united cause, apart from domestic interests, was the subject of monarchy. That the King should rule was with each an article of faith. . . .

But, after twenty years, this courageous woman found herself sent back for safety to her native land. With the rise of the Civil War she had assisted the King in what manner she might. At one time the house in which she was living was placed under fire from the Parliamentary guns and the Queen escaped, almost by accident. She was now once more in France, the news growing worse and worse, until the climax of the King's execution was reached. It is little wonder that her character changed under her affliction and that she became a more bitter type of woman, quarrelsome and hot-headed. Her two big sons were in Europe with her and she wished to rule them. They would not thus be ruled. While the King, their father, was alive they looked to their mother, in exile, for advice and assistance, but when Charles I died, Charles II became King, and Charles II was anxious to take his own advice. Between the Queen and her sons there was constant friction. Henrietta

would have Charles marry an heiress to bolster up his tottering fortunes and retrieve his financial ruin; to do away with his poverty, in fact. But this scheme did not in the least appeal to Charles. He had his own plans, nor did it suit his royal dignity to be ordered about by his mother. Yet again, James, while willing to obey his mother during the lifetime of his father, felt the position sensibly changed when Charles was dead. His alliance, he now felt, was due to his new King, and when Charles summoned him to Brussels and his mother commanded him to remain in Paris, he felt constrained to proceed to Brussels in obedience to the King's order. The Queen-Mother, as may be supposed, grew daily more short-tempered under these trials. Moreover, Paris had its own troubles at this time, which she was forced to share. The opponents of Mazarin, resenting his rise and influence, made Paris the scene of their commotion, so that the exiled Queen did not even enjoy tranquillity in her retreat.

History has not been kind to the memory of Henrietta Maria, but it should be remembered that neither were events. First, she was disappointed as a Queen and secondly, she was sent back to her own land, a fugitive. It should be recollected, however, that she retained her courage, even if she lost her temper. To the King and his brother, James, she seemed often but an added inconvenience, and what with poverty, their own Royalist followers and their domestic squabbles, there was not much satisfaction, even philosophic satisfaction, to be gained out of exile. Trouble seemed to spring up on all sides and from every, or any, cause. For a while it seemed that the Royal Cause was lost in a thousand petty quarrels. And in England, Cromwell was proclaimed Lord Protector.

There was, however, one source of consolation, for it cannot be termed satisfaction, that Charles and his brother did not deny themselves. They found consolation in their mistresses. Moving about in their

royal wretchedness they sought, and found, temporary oblivion in the charms of various lady loves. In that Stuart exile there began to pass that bright procession of mistresses that advanced and receded with the Stuart Cause. It began obscurely enough, in Holland, as early as 1648, when Charles discovered Lucy Walter (or Walters), but blossomed out in all its grace and splendour after the Restoration and faded out at last with the baby face of the Duchess of Portsmouth, and the sprightly Cockney siren, Nell Gwynn, weeping over the death of their royal lover, Charles II.

The very fact of this stately line of mistresses suggests that the Stuart Princes were deficient in the strong sense of affection, and, indeed, such was the case. They could feel deeply, there was strength in their emotions, but they never experienced the real fires of love. That big, compelling and moulding influence they lacked, and the want of it expressed itself in each life, in the large, loose, but indifferent life of Charles; in the narrower, walled, unopened life of James. The Duke's mind had never been expanded in the manner so essential to human nature. In the case of Charles, the young King very nearly surprised the sentiment of love in his affair with Lucy Walter. He almost touched the right level, though she was but a depraved baggage, and a mistress before ever Charles knew her. It was for her sake that he tolerated the miserable Monmouth, their son, retaining a fondness for him in spite of his repeated treacheries. But James did not approach the same spirit, and Charles never did again.

Even on the question of mistresses the brothers were oddly divided. Their tastes entirely differed, for whereas Charles took a mistress on account of her face or form, the interest of James lay in what was behind the face. When James was choosing a mistress, he chose someone whom he could talk to, but Charles wanted someone who would talk to him and, possibly, amuse him. The consequence was that Charles's

mistresses were pretty or witty or both. Little Cockney Nell was both, a credit to the orange trade, a patron sinner, curiously neglected by fruiterers. But James's mistresses tended towards plainness and seriousness. They were more earnest than witty, more learned than pretty. Sometimes, indeed, James's mistresses were beyond plainness, so much so that Charles could not refrain from rebuking his brother in jest. It was in later and better days, when James was tending towards Catholic convictions, but while on the subject of mistresses we may repeat the jest here. James had taken a new mistress, so plain and unattractive from Charles's point of view that the latter was moved to declare that James's father confessor must have ordered him to take the lady for his mistress, as a penance on account of his sins.

Putting mistresses aside, as the royal brothers were apt to do, we will now follow briefly the one outstanding incident that came midway between the years of exile. It had its origin in the Stuarts' own country, Scotland.

The news of the execution of Charles I aroused a storm of indignation all over Scotland, in spite of the fact that the Scots had sold him to the Parliament. Charles had been a native of Scotland. There was he born, and although in his life Scotland had not offered him much loyal support, although the Scots had fought him tooth and nail, a cry of rage went up at the news of his death. Moreover, between the Estates and the English Parliament there was no union of feeling and, taking the execution as a national affront, the Scots immediately proclaimed the son, Charles II, King, not only of Great Britain and Ireland, but of France as well. Since he was, in fact, King of nowhere, one supposes they thought it best to call him King of everywhere. The Rump Parliament retaliated by requesting the Scottish Commissioners to return to their own country, and the two Parliaments then settled down to a brisk exchange of stiff notes. Meanwhile, however, a commissioner had

been sent by the Scots to treat with Charles at Breda.

The peculiar difficulty that Charles now experienced was that of treating with two separate Scottish parties, each having the same object, and each refusing to work with the other on any terms. For Scotland, as usual, was divided into two distinct parties. There were the Covenanters on the one side, the constitutional body, and on the other the Montroses. Montrose, that great soldier who had supported Charles I in the late war, while the rest of Scotland opposed him, vowed himself ready to place Charles, the son, on the throne by sheer force of arms, but the Covenanters would have nothing to do with Montrose, whom they considered a traitor, and, further, they would have nothing to do with Charles if he, in turn, made any alliance with Montrose. Charles had to choose between the two parties and eventually he chose to be supported by the men of the Covenant, but there is no doubt that he would have preferred Montrose. With him it was a matter of expediency. Montrose, independent as ever, on hearing of Charles's resolution, went back to Scotland to fight for Charles, even though the King had refused his alliance. The famous Scotch soldier failed, was captured by the Covenanters and went to his death, celebrating the occasion by donning a new suit, and in gold-laced coat and scarlet silk stockings he bade farewell to this world.

The Covenanters made it clear that they were only willing to assist Charles and re-establish the Stuarts on their rightful throne on their own conditions, and one such condition was that he should sign the Covenant—the Solemn League and Covenant, that is, to establish the Presbyterian form of worship in England, Scotland and Ireland, and to permit no other religion within his own household. He was, moreover, to own the supremacy of the Scottish Parliament in all civil affairs, and the supremacy of the Kirk in all matters ecclesiastical, to enforce the penal laws against Catholics, and so on. It is no wonder

that Charles complained that never subjects yet had made such conditions as these they now brought him in his exile. But the Scottish commissioners were unyielding. Charles must accept their proposals in full, or they left him to his wanderings in Europe. It was with a gesture of despair and in hearty disagreement, that Charles resigned himself to his friends. On every side pressure was put upon him. Queen Henrietta urged him to make peace with the Scottish delegates on any terms. The Prince of Orange, too, brought all his persuasive eloquence to bear upon Charles, and with reason, since the burden of Charles and his retinue was at present being borne by him. The Treaty of Breda was, at length, ratified, Charles agreeing to, or at least not presuming to disagree with, all the conditions that the Covenanters laid before him. An invitation then arrived, urging Charles to be present at the next session of the Scottish Parliament, in order that he might receive the royal crown of Scotland. He was requested to land at St. Andrews, and a Committee of Welcome was appointed to meet him. It was a Dutch fleet that carried him back to the land of his fathers, and after a perilous voyage, lasting no less than three weeks, contending with storms and eluding the pursuit of the English Parliament, he was landed safely in the Firth of Cromarty. Charles arrived in Scotland in June, 1650, but before his right to land was formally acknowledged he had to sign the Covenant. He was then welcomed by the minister of the parish, who improved the occasion by preaching a sermon before Charles on the duty of kings.

It was a very few weeks later that Cromwell entered Scotland, at the head of his veterans. It was on the 22nd July that he crossed the Tweed with 16,000 finely trained men. He advanced through the wasted Lowland country and drew near to Edinburgh, being forced, however, to fall back from want of supplies. Cromwell had crossed the border with his soldiery before the Scottish levies were even gathered.

The Covenanters began feverishly to organize an army, the command of which was given to the seasoned Leslie. The country between Berwick and the capital was systematically laid waste, the cattle and provisions either removed or destroyed. Thus it was that Cromwell found his supplies failing and was compelled to fall back.

But the Scottish army was by now in being and Cromwell found his retreat barred upon the English side of Dunbar. Leslie was well posted, and Cromwell employed all his art to lure the Scotch from their strong position. For more than a month the English leader marched and counter-marched, but Leslie remained firmly fixed within his lines. The English began to show undoubted signs of fatigue, as sickness diminished their numbers and they must depend on the sea for their supplies. There is no doubt that Cromwell began to fear the passive control that Leslie was exercising on the situation. But the time came when the patience of the Scots, ill-disciplined and fanatical, was exhausted, and taking their own advice, putting their general aside, they abandoned the strong line of defence and fell upon the English. It was a mob of untrained enthusiasts that thus swept down upon the veterans, upon an army of highly-disciplined (and highly paid) men. Each side fought with biblical quotations to aid the weapons in their hands for, of course, the battle was really one between trained and untrained fanatics. The action began at sunrise and was all over in a few hours, with the complete destruction of the Scottish army and the loss of all its guns.

The King was not allowed to take part in this battle. He was at present in the hands of the ministers, who were trying to impart some of their own goodness to the sovereign. Their zeal was merciless, and in addition to their prayers, Charles was sometimes compelled to listen to six long sermons in the same day, during the whole of which he must assume an air of dignity, and show feelings of devotion. He was already paying very dearly for his crown.

Cromwell pressed on from Dunbar to Edinburgh, the army halting only to chant the 117th Psalm.

The Scots were bewildered by the disaster that had befallen them. They had surged forward to do God's work, to smite the sinful invader, and lo, they were themselves smitten. A day of public humiliation was ordered and a proclamation issued outlining the causes of the defeat of their army, which were roughly, the ignorance and profanity of the country, the wickedness of the King's household, and the indifference of the many in the things that mattered.

It was resolved to tighten up the screws everywhere and, for a start, most of Charles's household were ordered to quit Scotland. The King protested, but finding himself powerless in that realm and of so little account in all affairs, took a horse and rode away. The Commissioners then began to fear. They sent a mild letter after him, urging him to return, and after a proper delay, Charles yielded to their wishes, but his absence was not without its effect, for he came back a much more important individual than he had ridden away. The first matter that the Estates considered was that of his coronation. Charles was no longer a negligible quality to be abandoned to the mercies of preachers, and to have his affairs managed for him by ministers. Following his return he was, for the first time, permitted to sit in council. Thereafter he had a voice in all public matters. The Estates had received a lesson and they were quick enough to profit by it.

Charles was in a position now to insist on being crowned and the first day of the year 1651 was appointed for the ceremony. The coronation took place at Scone, Edinburgh being in the hands of Cromwell. Argyle put the crown on the King's head, while the ministers prayed that it might be purged from the sins of his ancestors. Charles returned to his palace, crown on head, sceptre in hand, the sword of state carried before him, and he was hailed with joy by the populace. Even the ministers testified that Charles

behaved throughout the ceremony with a proper seriousness and devotion.

The coronation was not a mere form. Charles was now a real King, endowed with real authority, nor was he unpopular with his new subjects. While Cromwell marched forward to further victory, Charles occupied himself in the raising of a new army. A crowned king was a good focus or rallying point, especially in the Highlands where the clan system had failed to absorb the republicanism of the Kirk, and thus lent itself much more naturally to the support of monarchy. The clan, by the way, was also a weakness to the King, since the clan was, as it were, confined to a certain area, and grew less effective by degrees, as it left behind its natural and native haunts. The clansmen, moreover, substituted loyalty and enthusiasm for discipline: a fatal weakness. All this and much more Charles was soon to discover for himself, and his successors to rediscover for themselves, notably in the '15, and still more strikingly in the '45.

But, in the meanwhile, Cromwell was pushing on from point to point, resistance crumbling before him. Dunbar had given the veterans that sense of superiority of which the masterly inactivity of Leslie had been steadily depriving them. The victory was marked by a rebound of English power over half of Scotland, and the Lowlands were completely at the mercy of the English invaders.

To the forming of his new army Charles devoted himself wholeheartedly, discovering an untiring energy and an unexpected ability that surprised friends and foes alike. His attention was given to everything, trivial or troublesome, and that ready tact which distinguished him later, together with the Stuart charm of manner, smoothed away difficulties and brought about alliances in a way that staggered the Estates. Recruits rallied to his standard, and Charles passed from point to point, here easing a hostile situation, there putting rapidity into a deliberate

slowness. The result was that not much later than six months after the fatal Battle of Dunbar he was in a position to put into the field a force of about 20,000 men. It is a tribute to the personality of the King that this force consisted of Covenanters, Montrose-men and Cavaliers. All these elements were present on equal terms and, for the moment, not hostile to one another. The bulk of the army was, however, drawn from the Highland clans.

It seemed, for the nonce, that the country might be again united, although in reality Charles was king of only a corner of Scotland. Beyond the Forth, Cromwell lay in complete possession of the southern shires, and the objective before the English leader was that objective that had directed every English army that had entered Scotland by either of the two main roads, the nodal point of Stirling. The situation left three courses open to Charles. He might risk all in seeking a battle with Cromwell, and in one throw decide the whole issue; he might retreat into the Highlands, where at least he should find safety, if little else; he might, finally, march on England, whither the way lay open before him. It was the last course that he took.

In the earlier part of this same year Cromwell had been ill, so ill, indeed, that he had contemplated returning to England. About June a rapid and unexpected improvement in his condition induced him to change his mind and continue his campaign. By July his army was turned towards Stirling. The Scotch line opposed him at Torwood, and therefore he turned aside to reach Glasgow. Superior tactics enabled the English to outmanœuvre the Scots, and the fertile county of Fife fell into the hands of the Cromwellians. Cromwell hastened to transport his army across the river Tay, to take the Scots in the rear. They retreated towards Perth, the present seat of government. Cromwell followed and Perth was besieged. On the 2nd of August it fell, but at the moment that Cromwell achieved his success, he

learned that Charles and his army had left Stirling and set off for the south. At the time that Cromwell was occupied with the north-eastern Lowlands, the road below Stirling lay open. Charles, seizing his opportunity, put the third of his three possible schemes into practice, and while his enemies were busy upon his left, he marshalled his forces on the fields below Stirling Rock, and led them out for the march on England.

Of the two possible roads to England that met at Stirling, he was obliged to take the more difficult western one, since that was the road that was clear, and with a force of about 12,000 men, he commenced his desperate dash south. His decision to reach England was one attended with enormous risks, but one by which he stood to gain everything, if he succeeded in gaining anything. It brought the whole question of the supremacy of Cromwell to a head, and the boldness of the design dazzled his Royalist friends as much as it bewildered the Parliamentary opposition. Left behind, Cromwell found himself in an embarrassing position. The rapid movement of Charles had given the latter an advantage of about three days' start. He would strike England in advance and much depended upon how England would receive him. For the plan of Charles relied upon a general backing in England, in the securing of which the King, unfortunately, believed. Should it not be found in the event, there seemed no obvious reason why Charles II should not share the fate of Charles I.

Cromwell turned to the pursuit and the Parliamentary veterans marched south with their accustomed rapidity. Charles, however, was able to move with sufficient swiftness with his ill-trained army, as almost to maintain his lead. From Stirling by the western ways he passed through Carlisle and then Penrith, which he reached on the 7th August, a distance of 140 miles or more, in seven days. Moreover the army was recruiting, to some extent, as it marched, so that the force that arrived at Penrith

numbered about 15,000 men. He had averaged not less than twenty miles a day. At Penrith, twenty-five miles over the English border, he was formally proclaimed King. From Penrith to Kendal over the fells, he took two more days, and there, as in every town through which he passed, he issued the proclamation of his kingship. Two days later he entered Lancaster, still unopposed, and the following day, at the Cross in the market-place, was again proclaimed. As Lancaster is the capital of the north-west of England, he might already consider himself King (by proclamation) of one quarter of his kingdom. He left Lancaster on the next day and two days after drew up at Preston, the march by now having slowed down to about ten miles a day. The next day took Charles beyond Wigan, to within a few miles of Warrington. It was at Warrington that the initial skirmish occurred. At this point the pursuit first got in touch with Charles. Cromwell s force had been hurrying along on the King's left, that is, on the inland side of the Scotch army. They managed to get a small detachment between Wigan and Warrington beyond the King, so that when Charles came upon the latter, a hostile company was holding Warrington village, while another force appeared to the north of Warrington town. Charles's army took the town by midday, and during the afternoon the bridge across the Mersey was carried. The Parliamentary forces thereupon retired towards Knutsford, hoping to tempt Charles into a battle. Charles, however, refused to be turned aside and continued his southward march.

The journey was continued by the King in a more thoughtful frame of mind, for already the signs were less happy. In England itself, there was very little recruiting and no sign of a general rising. The suddenness of the King's descent had taken the people by surprise, but, still more, the prudent people wished to see how Charles and his Scottish troops would succeed before they hastened to his aid. They wanted to make sure first that Charles was winning, so that

they might be sure of being on the winning side. But Charles, for his part, knew that he was little likely to win unless they were on his side. He had set out on this adventurous march; now he must go on. He was, furthermore, in process of discovering the limitations of the Highlanders. The farther they advanced from their native Highlands, the less useful they became. There had occurred already a certain number of desertions, and each further step south promised more. Passing through Cheshire, a reinforcement of less than 400 men was received, but of what value to the cause were 400 men? The small force was sent back into Lancashire, where it was hoped that considerable numbers could be raised. These numbers were then to be used to keep the fight going behind the King, while he, with his main army, advanced. But the project was defeated by the failure of Lancashire to rise to the occasion. The men of the northwest remained still, waiting to see which way the fight would go. . . .

Meanwhile, Charles passed on, and six days after the skirmish outside Warrington he had reached the town of Worcester. It was a fine piece of marching that he had accomplished, averaging nearly twenty miles a day. Worcester was the termination of the southward rush. While Charles was fortifying the town, Cromwell and the Parliamentary army reached Evesham. The two armies were thus virtually in touch, Cromwell's outnumbering his opponent's by almost two to one. But the numbers do not give the true contrast between the two forces. Cromwell's army was a well-disciplined body ready for action; while Charles's was poorly organized and, moreover, it had lost its first high confidence. The failure to find the expected support in England had isolated the King's force and weighed heavily on the Scotch spirits, while the distance from their mountains increased the Highlanders' depression.

The Battle of Worcester took place on the 3rd September, 1651, exactly one year after the disaster

of Dunbar. It was an action in which the Scots shone brilliantly at moments, but that is the best that can be said for them. Outnumbered and out-generalled (their General Leslie did not appear on the field until the battle was over and lost, nor has any adequate explanation for his extraordinary absence yet appeared) they resisted with determination, contesting the way, hedge by hedge, ditch by ditch, until the last ditch was reached. The better equipped, better organized army won the day. In the result Charles's army was totally destroyed and Cromwell was finally established over the people of England. His position was never again challenged. He reigned on until his death, and his rule was much more despotic than ever Stuart rule had been, or was to be. He showed, moreover, that though a great leader of cavalry, he was not possessed of political sagacity, and his various policies and counter-policies had got the country into a remarkable state of confusion when he was taken ill a few years later, assured his wife, his medical man and everyone else that he had received a direct message from Heaven that he would recover, and promptly died. Among other neglects, he had made no provision for his successor. . . . But that is another story.

Charles's army was utterly routed at Worcester and, in his distress, seeing his men throwing down their arms and fleeing in all directions, he called upon them to shoot him rather than let him live to witness the sad consequences of that day. But he was not yet marked down for death ; indeed, he was about to make one of those thrilling and splendid escapes from the circle of his foes, that the Stuarts, and they alone, could accomplish. Nearly a century in advance, he was to give a lead to his gallant descendant, Bonnie Prince Charlie. Yet not every Stuart knew how to escape.

After the battle every effort was made to capture the defeated King. A reward of £1,000 (some £10,000 at least of our money) was offered for his person,

and the crime of treason was declared against anyone who should presume to give him shelter. Parties of horse and foot prowled ceaselessly, by day and by night, about the adjacent counties in search of him, while magistrates received strict orders to arrest every unknown person and to maintain a strict and constant watch on the seaports in their vicinity. Yet the days dragged on and no word was heard of the fugitive King. Neither could news of his flight be learned, nor trace of his retreat be discovered. As the weeks passed the fate of almost every other distinguished Royalist was known, but of their chief, not a clue was forthcoming. In the end it was practically assumed that Charles had perished, either at the hands of the peasants, ignorant of his quality and of the big reward offered for his capture, or by some still more mysterious means. And then, forty-four days after the date of the Worcester debacle, the astounding news reached the Parliamentary ears that the King had landed on the coast of Normandy and was, after incredible adventures, once more in safety.

The story of his escape reads like a detective novel, and the devotion and fidelity of his adherents is a striking tribute to the popularity of the Crown in the hearts of the people, but especially the poor people. He could have been betrayed with impunity a hundred times ; he was at the mercy of the poor with a large sum set on his head. Those who aided him, moreover, placed themselves in a delicate position with regard to the law. Yet Charles, menaced though he was, was not betrayed. The people were devoted to the King and, even if they did not rise for him against his opponent, the Lord Protector, who had assumed control of the realm, nevertheless they would not give him away. The monarchy still meant much to the common people and had Cromwell chanced to find himself in the position of Charles after Worcester, no one can believe for a moment that he would have experienced a like fidelity and devotion, or that the care of the people would thus have been expended on him.

After the battle Charles found himself in the midst of a body of Scottish cavalry. The crushing defeat had left all with the one idea of seeking safety, somehow, somewhere. This body of fugitives was too numerous to hope to elude the pursuit, and far too dispirited to fight. "Beaten men" was the very accurate term that Charles applied to them, and the phrase described them. Under cover of darkness he separated himself from the main body of fugitives, and he confessed later that although he could not induce them to stand for him against the enemy, he yet had much difficulty in getting rid of them when the battle was over. Together with a much smaller band of faithful followers, Charles set out for the house known as Whiteladies, which stood near Boscobel, and was distant about five and twenty miles from the field of the Worcester fight. At an early hour in the morning the troops reached Whiteladies. While his tired adherents sought a short repose under this Royalist roof, the King withdrew to disguise himself as best he might in the small time that was at his disposal. His hair was cut off and his hands and face discoloured, while he changed his garments for the coarser, commoner kind of wear, affected by the labouring kind of people. At sunrise his companions took their leave of him, greatly distressed that they must part with their leader and one whom they had tried to put on the throne, but the parting was well advised. They rode away at random, almost in any direction, since, not only had they nowhere to go, but it was their desire to draw the pursuit upon themselves, and, therefore, away from the King. In this they were partly successful.

The disguised Charles was handed over to the special care of six brothers, by name Penderell. The Penderells were poor people, ordinary labouring men though of prosperous ancestors, and the King was not without fear in consequence, that their poverty might lead them to give him up and claim the reward. He was assured, however, that no such treachery was

likely to come from these brothers. They came of an old Catholic family that had grown the poorer on account of its faith, and they now made a kind of mission of secreting priests and Cavaliers from the civil magistrates and the Parliamentary military officers. They had reduced, almost to a fine art, the hiding of wanted men, and their success in the past still hung heavily upon them. It was fortunate, indeed, for Charles that he was placed in the charge of these brothers. It was into the hands of Richard Penderell that Charles was first given, and Richard led him away into a thick wood adjoining Whiteladies, what time the remaining brothers posted themselves at various points of vantage to observe possible avenues of approach. Not long after he had quitted the house of Whiteladies a troop of Parliamentary horse rode up seeking the whereabouts of the King. Finding that he was not at the house, they then set off on the track of the King's followers, who had started away by themselves at sunrise. It was a wet and stormy day that Charles passed in the wood, and while it was yet daylight he saw through the trees near the edge of the wood by the highway, a troop of horse go by. These soldiers did not stay to search the wood, for they did not think that the King was in that neighbourhood.

Charles was thus far safe, though the hunt was only beginning, and during his concealment in the wood he discussed with his guide, Richard, the possibility of making his way to London in disguise. Richard thought very little of the project and himself devised a better plan of escape, which was that of getting the King smuggled across the Severn, and so into Wales. Once over the border, either at Swansea or at some other seaport that held commerce with France, a ship might be found that would carry him across the water to safety.

About nine o'clock that night Charles and his guide abandoned the shelter of the trees in order to make their way to a house at Madeley, belonging to a

Catholic recusant, but situated not far from the river Severn. They reached Madeley about midnight, but not without adventure, for as they were passing a mill by the roadway they were challenged and, giving no answer, were chased. They got away from this new enemy (if enemy it were) by running swiftly up a long and muddy lane, jumping a hedge, beneath which they lay without moving, until they were satisfied that the way was clear. At Madeley they aroused Mr. Wolf, for such was the name of the owner of the house, from his bed and he opened his door to them. But here they were to learn fresh bad news. Parliamentary troops, they heard, were quartered in that very village, and all the hiding places in the house, and indeed in the neighbourhood, had been discovered. Daylight was now approaching, which made it equally dangerous either to retreat or to venture forward. Mr. Wolf, therefore, hid Charles and his guide in his barn, and for a full day there they lay covered only with corn and hay. Meanwhile, their perplexed and frightened host sent out messengers to find how the river passages were guarded. They brought back the report that all the bridges were in the hands of the soldiers, as also were the boats. In the circumstances, it was clearly impossible for the King to slip through into Wales, and Charles readily grasped the situation. He gave up the idea, deciding to return the way he had come. With the fall of night, therefore, he and the faithful Penderell retraced their steps and, without mishap, arrived safely at the house at Boscobel. They chose Boscobel as being the most retired house in the neighbourhood. Boscobel house, by the way, was quite close to Whiteladies, where the adventure began.

At Boscobel the wanderers discovered Colonel Careless, a Cavalier who had escaped from Worcester, after seeing the last man fall on that fatal field. It was considered unwise for the King to remain there, secluded as the house was. The colonel persuaded him to take refuge in the wood. They chose a thick-leafed

oak tree for their retreat. Richard Penderell assisted them both to mount its branches, and a cushion was passed up for the King to sit on. Hidden away amongst the leaves (the tree had been partially lopped a few years before and the new shoots had sprung up, thick and luxuriant), Charles and his companion passed the whole day. Not able to be seen from below, they themselves were occasionally able to catch sight of the red coat of a soldier down below. For the wood was actually being searched for him, while Charles was perched like a bird on one of the trees. During a portion of the day the King forgot his danger and slept; he had obtained little rest the two preceding nights, and while he slumbered the Colonel supported him, lest he should fall. With the coming of darkness they climbed down from the big oak, and made their way back to the house.

The next day Charles passed within the four walls. He was gloomy and depressed, but during the long hours a message was brought in by one of the Penderell brothers urging the King to repair to Moseley, to the house of one Mr. Whitgreave, yet another Catholic recusant. By this time the King's feet were so swollen and blistered by his walking in ancient and ill-fitting shoes, made for another man, that it was decided to secure the miller's horse before he attempted to make this new journey. It is no exaggeration to say that the King's appearance at this stage disgraced the miller's horse, rather than that the miller's horse, a sorry mount, disgraced the King. Charles was clad in a coat and breeches of a common green cloth, worn to threads. His doublet was of leather, old and soiled. His shoes were heavy and slashed about in order to ease his swollen feet. His stockings were darned at the knees and lacking wholly in feet, while on his head was perched a venerable, but greasy steeple-crowned hat, that once had been grey and was now bandless and without a lining. Thus attired, he mounted the miller's steed, which had a "pitiful old saddle and a worse bridge." The six Penderell

brothers, the full family, attended him, bearing in their hands ancient weapons. Two walked before and two behind Charles, while the other two marched one on each side. It must have been a quaint procession that thus set out from Boscobel late that Sunday night; a kind of parody of a royal procession and one which Charles was to think of later, when he rode in state in his own capital, royally attended.

Moseley was soon reached. It was but five miles distant. Here the King was met by Lord Wilmot, a Royalist fugitive, and Whitgreave, his latest host. A new plan for the King's escape was discussed. The plan was that Charles should assume the character of the servant of Colonel Lane's sister, of Bentley, who had lately obtained a pass from the governor of Stafford to visit a relative who resided near Bristol. Lane was yet another Royalist, and if Charles, in the guise of a servant, could be smuggled through to the busy seaport of Bristol, the chances were that a French ship could be found. Charles received the plan with approval, and Lord Wilmot departed to make all necessary arrangements for his reception at Bentley. The King now hoped to enjoy a few days' rest and sentinels were posted at various points to inform him of approaching danger. The risk was daily increasing, for it was known, or felt, that the King was somewhere in the neighbourhood. Both Whiteladies and Boscobel had been visited by the Parliamentary troops since the monarch had journeyed to Moseley. On the next day they arrived at Moseley, to the consternation of the inhabitants. Charles was standing near a window when he observed a neighbour run suddenly into the house and immediately after, from below the stairs, he heard the cry of "Soldiers." Preparations had been made for such a crisis. The King was instantly shut up in the secret hiding place that this particular house boasted, a priest's hiding hole, and all the doors of the house were thrown open. Mr. Whitgreave went out and met the troops in front of his house. They would have seized him for a fugitive

Cavalier, but he was able to convince them, on the testimony of his neighbours, that he had not been from Moseley for several weeks. Eventually they allowed themselves to be persuaded of the truth of the statement and went off without searching the house.

It was a very narrow escape and Charles was not sorry that night to start out for Bentley, a distance of about six miles, under the care of Colonel Lane. Mr. Whitgreave, for his part, left immediately for London, feeling that he would be safer a very long distance from his home, nor did he return to Moseley until the news was conveyed to him that Charles was safe and sound in France. Meanwhile, at Bentley, Charles was speedily transformed from a labouring man to a respectable servant and a decent suit of grey cloth " as near as could be contrived like a holy-day suit of a farmer's son, which was thought fittest to carry on the disguise," was given him in place of his rags. The name under which he now went was Will Jackson.

The day after his arrival at Bentley, the King set out with Colonel Lane's sister, and as her servant, for Leigh, near Bristol. He departed on horseback with his supposed mistress behind him, and after a journey lasting three days reached Abbotsleigh, where resided the relative of Mrs. Jane Lane. The journey was not without adventure. Not long had they been on the road when the horse cast a shoe. While the animal was being re-shod, Charles asked the smith what might be the latest news. There was no news, the smith informed him, since the good news of the beating of those rogues, the Scots. Were any of the English taken, who had joined the Scots ? asked the King. Some had been so taken, admitted the smith, but not, that he could discover, that rascal, Charles Stuart. The King replied gravely that if the rascal were taken, he richly deserved to be hanged ; upon which the smith was moved to acknowledge that he spoke like an honest man. With that, they parted.

Again, near Stratford, it was necessary for them to pass by a troop of Parliamentary soldiers, which, however, was accomplished without mishap. The first night they stopped at a house at Long Marston, the second at an inn at Cirencester, and the third night saw them safe at Abbotsleigh. At each of these stopping-places, the royal servant had to perform his duties, and Charles showed remarkable presence of mind, carrying off many an awkward situation with considerable skill and credit. In the presence of strangers and under the stern criticism of servants, it was not discovered that he was not a real serving man. Lord Wilmot and Colonel Lane made the same journey as the royal fugitive, hovering round the King and watching events of the road from a safe distance. They rode with hawks on their fists and with dogs at their heels, and the boldness of their manner and the suggestion of sport that they carried were more effective in hiding them than any disguise could have been.[1] On their arrival at the house of Lane's relative, he was named Norton, the disguise was still kept up, but under pretence of indisposition, Charles was given a separate chamber. But the next morning, when he repaired to the servants' quarter with the intention of breaking his fast, the King received an unpleasant shock. While the menials were partaking of bread and butter, good ale and sack, he discovered that the small company included two persons whom he had rather not have seen. One had been a private in his own guards' regiment at Worcester, while the other had been a servant at the Palace at Richmond, when Charles had lived there several years before. It was fortunate that the first did not recognize the King, though he was able to give a fairly good account of the action at Worcester and, with some exactitude, to describe the person of the King. But the old servant from Rich-

[1] "I could never get my Lord Wilmot to put on any disguise, he saying that he should look frightfully in it; and therefore did never put on any."—King Charles II to Pepys.

mond Palace knew the features of Charles too well to have any doubt as to his identity. Privately Charles acknowledged to the old man that he was indeed the King, and he requested his assistance in making good his escape. The former royal servant was named John Pope, and at Mr. Norton's house he filled the office of butler.

Through Pope's aid, Charles was enabled to hold conferences with Lord Wilmot at night time in his chamber. The original plan, however, failed, for it was discovered to be rash in the extreme to attempt to take ship from Bristol, which was being carefully watched. It was, therefore, resolved that the King should remove to the house of Colonel Windham, a Cavalier with whom he was acquainted and who lived at Trent, near Sherborne, on the borders of Dorset, and conveniently situated on the way to Lyme Regis and other port towns actively engaged in shipping with France. A messenger was, thereupon, dispatched to prepare Colonel Windham for the King's coming, and at the same time a letter was written that should give Mrs. Lane a reasonable excuse for her sudden departure with her servant.

At his new retreat at Trent, Charles enjoyed a small measure of repose, while arrangements were being made for his putting to sea. He began to hope for a speedy liberation from danger, but once more such hope was ill-grounded. A ship was indeed hired at Lyme to convey a nobleman and his servant, i.e. Wilmot and the King, to the coast of France. The time and the place of embarkation were fixed. The ship was to be ready at Charmouth, a little village near Lyme. The King was accommodated at the tiny inn at Charmouth, there to await the barque. The night passed, however, and no boat entered the little creek, nor could any sign of one be discerned in the offing. Consternation prevailed and with the coming of dawn the King and his companions thought it wise to separate, each making his way to a different retreat. It was learned later that the skipper of the

promised vessel had had the misfortune to inform his wife that he had agreed to transport two or three persons of quality to France, whom he shrewdly suspected to be Cavaliers. On hearing this news, she promptly locked him up in his chamber, "and would by no means permit him to go the voyage." She declined to allow her husband to land the family in unnecessary danger.

Charles was now to return to Trent, but, in the meantime, he put in at Bridport to wait at an inn to learn what had delayed the chartered ship. At Bridport he was concerned to find no less than fifteen hundred Parliamentary soldiers about to embark on an expedition against Jersey. He seemed to walk out of one peril into another. Charles, however, still disguised as a serving man, resolved to carry the matter off with a bold manner. He pushed his way into the inn yard, leading his horse through the crowd with such carelessness that he provoked complaint. But at the stable yet a further shock lurked, for the hostler greeted him as an old acquaintance, claiming to have known him in the service of a Mr. Pott of Exeter. Lest the fellow should be moved to guess more accurately, Charles pretended that the man was correct in his surmise, but with great presence of mind the hunted King replied: "Friend, certainly you have seen me at Mr. Pott's, for I served him a good while above a year; but as I have no leisure now, we must renew acquaintance on my return from London over a pot of beer." He then passed on as if to perform some servile duties for his master, and the hostler had no suspicion as to whom he had just spoken.

After dinner the King was joined by Wilmot, who was able to inform him why it was that no ship had put in to Charmouth creek during the previous night; that the master had been detained by the fears of his wife and that assistance from this quarter must not in the future be expected. It was yet another setback, and in low spirits the party returned to Trent, there to hold yet a further council to plan the King's escape. Two new and disturbing factors had to be

considered: (1) that the ships in the neighbouring ports were being seized for the transportation of troops to Jersey, and were, therefore, of no use to the King, and (2) that mysterious rumours were afloat relative to the presence of Charles in that part of the country. It was obvious to his friends that the King must speedily remove himself, both for his own safety and in order that he might secure a ship that should take him away from the country. It was resolved to send out into Sussex, to a Royalist, Colonel Gunter, to see whether it was possible to procure a vessel at one of the Sussex ports, and, meanwhile, the King departed for Salisbury for greater safety. He stopped at the house of a widow gentlewoman, Mrs. Hyde, a Loyalist who had watched the King, his father, pass through Salisbury, leading his hopeless army to the end of its career, a few years before. The widow considered it risky that anyone should suppose that a fugitive was resting at her house, and so after passing the night there, the King took his horse and made as if he were quitting the neighbourhood and continuing his over-night journey. He and a companion rode out as far as Stonehenge, and remained a while viewing the famous ruins. It is interesting to learn that the King's curiosity at this moment made him count the stones not once, but twice, and thus give the lie to the fable or legend then current that the ancient stones could not be counted twice alike together. And having spent the day among the wonderful relics of an early mystery, Charles returned by night to Salisbury, and was by Mrs. Hyde safely stowed away in the hiding hole that her house contained. Most Catholic or Royalist houses at this period seem to have had their own peculiar hiding holes, and that which was designed for concealing the hunted priest was frequently made use of to hide the King. It is one of the ironies of history that it was the persecution of the Catholics under the Stuarts that caused such secret places originally to be constructed.

After he had been safely hidden away for the space of five days at Salisbury, news came through from Colonel Gunter, down in Sussex, that he had been able to engage the services of a collier, then lying at New Shoreham, and in this vessel it was proposed to make a fresh attempt to leave the country. Charles, accordingly, departed from Salisbury, leaving the widow's house by the back way, at about two o'clock in the morning. He and his companion set out for Shoreham, and about fifteen miles on their way they were met by Colonel Gunter, who conducted them to his brother-in-law's house at Hambledon, where they remained until darkness once again fell. At this house at Hambledon, the brother-in-law, who was known as Mr. Symonds, was somewhat suspicious of the King, for he had not been enlightened as to his identity, and in whispered tones he asked his brother, was not this some Roundheaded rogue's son who had thus come among them ? And later, when he was drinking beer with the King, he addressed him as " Brother Roundhead."

By the next morning the party had come to Brighthelmstone, or as we call it Brighton, within a few miles of Shoreham, and there they made a stop, while Gunter brought the master of the collier along to meet them. The skipper, who was named Tattershall, was invited round to the inn for supper, when definite arrangements would be made. At the table Tattershall kept his eyes fixed on the King and after supper he declared to one of the party that he had been cheated, for whereas his vessel had been chartered to carry over to France one who had escaped from the battle of Worcester, it had not been made known to him that that person was the King. The individual in the servant's grey costume he knew to be the King, for Tattershall had been with the royal fleet in 1648, that had been commanded by the Prince of Wales. The news of his discovery was carried to Charles who, however, wisely made no change in his bearing towards Tattershall, but in order to make sure that he did not

lose the skipper, contrived to keep him at the inn, drinking and smoking at the table during the remainder of the night. It was feared that if Tattershall ventured home, he might be locked in by an overzealous wife, as had the previous skipper, who should have met the King at Charmouth.

Before Charles was suffered to depart, yet a further surprise was in store for him. For as he was standing in a room at the inn, his hand resting behind him on the back of a chair, the landlord entered, and, seeing that there was no one else in the room, suddenly kissed the King's hand, remarking : " I have no doubt that, if I live, I shall be a lord and my wife a lady." Charles laughed to show that he understood the other's meaning, but not wishful to discuss the matter, quickly rejoined his party in another room. It is remarkable how often the King was recognized in this flight from Worcester by those who would not give him away, and was not recognized by those who were searching for him. At four in the morning they all proceeded to Shoreham, taking the master of the collier with them on horseback behind one of the company. On the beach his companions took their leave of the King, Wilmot alone accompanying Charles on board. The ship was lying in low water and a ladder was required before they could board her. The two passengers went immediately to lie down in the little cabin until the tide came in to carry them off. While they were thus resting, Tattershall came in and falling on his knees, solemnly assured the King that knowing him for what he was, he would engage to put him safely on the coast of France, whatever might be the consequences to himself.[1]

About seven o'clock in the morning the ship floated with the tide and stood with easy sail towards the Isle of Wight, as if she were on her way to Poole, to which port indeed she was normally bound. Once out of sight of Shoreham, however, a little play was

[1] Soon after the collier had departed, a troop of Parliamentary soldiers rode into Shoreham in search of the King.

acted for the benefit of the sailors, four men and a boy. It had been arranged that Charles should address the crew and he told them (and he declares "truly") that he and his companion were two merchants in misfortune, a little in debt and, therefore, in danger of arrest. Some money was owing to them, however, he assured the sailors, in the town of Rouen, and if they (the crew) would persuade their skipper to carry the merchants over to Dieppe or another port near Rouen, Charles, for his part, would give them twenty shillings to drink. Tattershall, when the proposal was put to him by the King and the crew, pretended to find many objections, but at length and with much apparent reluctance, he took the helm and began to steer the ship across the Channel. The Isle of Wight began to fade behind them and they sailed on through the day and through the dark, but with the coming of dawn the coast of France stretched out before them. The tide now failing and the wind coming about to the south-west, they were forced to anchor within two miles of the shore. And while they lay there becalmed, they espied a suspicious-looking vessel to leeward, which by the manner of its working they believed to be a privateer from Ostend, if it was not something worse. She afterwards turned out to be a harmless French hoy, but Charles and Wilmot did not linger to find out the full facts at this stage. They had known adventures enough and they fled from more. In front of them lay safety. In their sight was the little French town of Fécamp, and to bring their escape to an end, they induced Tattershall to cause the boat to be lowered and themselves rowed ashore. Thus was the King, forty-four days after the fatal fight at Worcester, landed on foreign shores and safe from the clutches of his enemies; thus, also, was the Parliament relieved of the necessity of paying over £1,000, that had been promised as a reward for the person of the King.

It is possible that the King won more popularity on account of his escape after disaster, than he would

have won had he gained the battle of Worcester. His escape appealed to the sporting instincts of the English, even during the Puritan dominion. But all Europe was joyous at his deliverance, for it had been feared that the horror and disgust excited by the death of the father were again to be raised by the death of the son. And the King returned to his continental wanderings more popular now than he had been before his disastrous enterprise. The popularity did not, unfortunately, remain with him, but the exile did remain. The old troubles of the exiles welled again to the surface, with this additional cause for discontent: that the only effort that Charles Stuart was capable of making to regain the throne of his fathers had now been made, and it had failed.

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Meanwhile, what were the adventures of James, the Duke of York, during the period in which he was exiled from England? It is a matter to which we may turn for a moment. Oppressed with poverty, with no occupation, yet unfitted for idleness, James gave his attention to a military career. After the news of Worcester, it was the general European opinion and particularly the impression of the young French King and of Mazarin, that the Stuart cause was lost for good and all in England. The young Duke had, therefore, his own way to make and he chose active service in the French army. He was then under nineteen years. A small sum was required for his equipment. He borrowed 300 pistolas from a Gascon money-lender, rather than trouble his impoverished family on his account. For the next six years, until his twenty-fifth year and not long before the Restoration, he threw himself with enthusiasm into the profession of arms. He loved the military life and showed great capacity as a soldier. It was in the French army that he found the life he liked to lead, and if events had not rendered it impossible, it is highly probable that he would have continued thus to follow the military life. It was a new experience and

it thrilled him, nor was it without great influence on the formation of his character.

James found himself fighting the battles of France under that great soldier, Turenne, who had a special regard for the royal recruit. He praised James's courage highly, and also his military instinct that told him what to do quickly and at the right moment. And, furthermore, he insisted on lending the young man a sum of money to free him from the family embarrassment. The Duke of York kept a diary of his soldiering days that makes excellent reading to-day and contains vivid descriptions of actions and conditions in the French wars of other days.

It is no intention of these pages to follow the French campaigns that coincided with the first exile of the Stuarts, or to comment on the wars of the giants, when Turenne and Condé were in opposition. An incident here and there must suffice to explain James. He was present, for instance, at the siege of Mousson, in 1653. He was just on twenty years at the time. He writes in his diary of how, after they had gone up to the front line of trenches, a shot hit three barrels of gunpowder by which he was standing. He explains that the barrels did not explode and it seems to him rather a jest to imagine what would have happened to him if they had. Two years later he is at the siege of St. Ghislain, and he tells another little joke about how he lived in a small hut within musket-shot of the walls, while his fellow officers were content to remain behind, out of range even of the cannon. The joke was that the enemy believed that the hut was empty and, on that account, the Duke was enabled to witness their every move from close at hand. It is not every one who would have enjoyed the point of this particular joke.

The same year (1655) saw the transfer of his service from the French to the Spanish army. It was not a move that he desired, but was dictated by expediency. French policy, for the moment, tended towards an alliance with England or, more directly, with Cromwell,

the killer of James's father. Cromwell was bargaining the use of his army between France and Spain, putting up to the better bidder, what was probably the best disciplined, the best paid, and certainly the most efficient army in Europe at that day; and the French bid was the higher. Cromwell insisted, however, that if James, Duke of York, was to remain in the French army, he should not be allowed to fight in Flanders. The Lord Protector was quite justified in his stipulation. The English army was to be employed in Flanders, and James in that district would have been a centre of English desertions. The despotism that had taken the place of popular monarchy in England was becoming increasingly disliked by the people. James was a very real danger in Flanders, a bigger danger, perhaps, than the army that Cromwell offered his troops to oppose. Under the same set of conditions, Cromwell stipulated that Charles, the King, must be permanently exiled from France. Now, in accordance with the new conditions, James had been put down for work with the French army in Italy, but upon the alliance between Cromwell and Mazarin being struck, Charles ordered his brother to leave the French army altogether. Wrench though it was to abandon the life that he loved, James, with characteristic promptness, obeyed his King.

He forsook the French service, but he got leave from Charles, in 1657, to serve with the Spaniards. He was present at the battle of the Dunes—in spite of Cromwell's precautions. But though he was with the Spaniards, and the English and the French, his own countrymen and his late companions in arms, were against him, his greatest joy in that battle was the performance of Cromwell's veterans. He loved with a curious intensity, did this exile, all things English, and the success of an English regiment, even at his own expense, was to him a subject for pleasure. He describes in his diary (with what enthusiasm!) how the English in their red coats came charging up the long sand-hill in front of Dunkirk, and of how, with

a roar, they beat back the Spaniards at the summit. He led his own horse out against them, but he was in turn beaten back, and he seems to take pride thus to have been defeated by his own countrymen.

It was later, after this same battle of the Dunes, that Reynolds, who commanded the Cromwellian troops, sent a message desiring an interview with the Duke. At this meeting between foes, Reynolds did not hesitate to declare that his heart was with the Stuart cause, as were the hearts of most Englishmen.

Apart from the fact that he enjoyed the military life, the life of movement and camp fires, of sudden thrills and long spells of endurance, James did not find the Spanish service as suitable as he had found the French. The French order and efficiency was more pleasing to his temperament and, moreover, he understood it. With whatever army he fought, James was never a soldier of fortune (though more than once he might be called a soldier of misfortune). He threw himself with headlong, but never light-headed, enthusiasm into the service to which he belonged. It was undoubtedly easier to throw one's energies into the French service of those days, than into the Spanish. Spain was now a great military nation in decline. It had spent its force ; almost shot its bolt. That fiery passion that had led the people of the captured Peninsula never to make terms with their conquerors, but to continue the battle against them until the Moors were hurled out of Europe ; that strange strength that would not be satisfied with the reconquest of their own country, but must needs go forth to the splendid attempt to conquer Europe, or at least to the formation of a Spanish Empire, with far-flung frontiers—that power was now abated. A new weakness flowed into the body of the nation. It was exhausted with over-effort. The vision had failed. The machine was rapidly slowing down. The renowned armies were rolled backwards. It was at this moment in the nation's history that fortune threw James into contact with the Spanish

failure. It was his luck to serve Spain when Spain could no longer serve herself.

Nearly a century earlier, we observed how the Spanish organization was slowing down, how formality was taking the place of perception and decision. That slowness was already a mark of Spain in the time of Philip II, and he was really a great man. Now it was not so much that the slowness of movement was obvious, as that nothing else was obvious. If the red-tape methods had been there in the time of Philip, by now the official tape had strangled the officials. So James was shocked to notice when he found himself a soldier of Spain, and it was against a blank wall of obsolete officialdom that he hurled himself, when he joined in to help the country that had grown not only helpless, but—as we can see, though the vision was denied to that generation—hopeless. His active military sense and his keen soldier's eye were useless in the Spanish disorganization. Indeed, he was useless to the service and it was useless to him. He was far too active for the passivity of the Spanish headquarters. He made no contact with his colleagues. When, for example, on service, he saw an opportunity of cutting off a big convoy of the enemy, he was refused permission because the Commander, Don John, had given no such order. When he persisted that Don John should immediately be sought and asked for the necessary order, he learned that the Commander could on no account be disturbed. And the reason why he could not be disturbed was that he was taking his afternoon siesta—at the time that the army was advancing during war!

The siesta of Don John, the fact that it was imperative that he must sleep his sleep undisturbed, and the fact that no one else might assume the sleeping warrior's authority, taken together, represented pretty thoroughly the state of Spain while James was serving. It was a service to which he was not allowed to devote himself, for such devotion was an embarrassment to his superiors. To take

another example, and to return, for a moment, to the battle of the Dunes; before the battle, the Duke of York, alone of the officers, had advanced to the front line to witness the preparations of his opponents. Grasping the situation with military accuracy, he realized at what moment the Anglo-French army was about to advance. He passed on the information to Don John and the officers, and they simply declined to credit him. Having been nowhere near the line, they nevertheless knew better than James. One may imagine the gesture of disappointment, not to say despair, of the royal recruit amid the incompetence of the Spaniards' headquarters. He, the stranger, seemed to be the only one who had a real interest in the proceedings, while the natives were quite incapable of grasping the situation, or caring about the details of the work. They took their siestas, but when they should have been awake, it seemed that they still walked in their sleep. Difficult, indeed, was it for the wide-awake Duke of York to march and keep step with this company of somnambulists.

He was probably not sorry when the campaign came to an inglorious conclusion, and he was free once more to resume his wanderings. There was one point, however, about the somewhat eccentric wanderings of the royal brothers in Europe in search of support or service, that was to have important bearing on their future. Wandering about as they did, and mainly in Catholic countries, it was inevitable that they should lose most of their prejudices against this particular sect. The bias of the government of England against the Catholics they had each early known, and they were bred to share their father's devotion to the cause of English Protestantism. Yet, in the midst of Catholics, sojourning in Catholic lands and enjoying the hospitality of Catholics, they discovered, and it is probable that they made the discovery with some measure of surprise, that Catholics were not entirely the unholy terrors that the penal laws in England suggested. They found that the religion contained

men who were both reasonable and loyal. They were, each in his separate way, to be attracted by the Catholic philosophy. Charles the more readily, for his mind was more open, James with greater steadiness, for he looked twice at all things that were not English. Charles, politic and thinking of the present, put his private conviction in the background and went about his business. James, however, kept nothing at the back of his mind. He moved more slowly, but when he was convinced he spoke his conviction. It was later, the date is still uncertain, after the Restoration, that he became thoroughly convinced, but his conversion to Catholicism followed as soon as his mind was clear. It was his ruin.

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In the autumn of 1658 the news was wafted across the waters that Cromwell was dead. It was on the 3rd of September that he died, a date that had brought him different news in the past years. It was the date of the victory of Dunbar, as also of Worcester field. But even this tremendous information seemed powerless to change the lot of the exiles. They were still on foreign soil, and no hope was held out from England. They still went about their business of raising money and looking forlornly and with diminishing hope to the future ; seeking to avoid the present. They were as yet but princely beggars, urged to get rid of their out-at-elbow followers who, in truth, were little satisfaction either to their King or to his hosts. But though the death of Oliver Cromwell might merely seem the appointment of Richard Cromwell to supply his place, the appearances were deceptive. Richard Cromwell, the old friend of Royalists and rioters, had none of his father's military talents, nor yet did he have the ambition that had sustained Oliver. It was soon seen that there were more ambitious than he in the land, and with the next year it was quite evident that queer things were happening in England. That mysterious man, Monk, who had remained in Scotland since

Cromwell left it in order to pursue the young King to Worcester, and again from Worcester, was moving in his enigmatic way. He was acting strangely, the chairman of a queer board that composed its letters jointly while he signed them. And whom did he represent? Nobody knew, and consequently nobody could understand Monk. Later it was known that he was on his way south and that the old Parliamentary general, Fairfax, who had long retired in disgust from the centre of the successful rebellion and who would have nothing further to do with his old friends, was coming out of York to meet him. And in London all the while, the different generals of that splendid army that had conquered the King, were rising and falling on successive waves, quarrelling among themselves and making alliances, deposing Richard Cromwell and fearing to put anyone in his place. Alarms and excursions were the order of the day, and secret meetings took place at night. And while all was swaying in uncertainty and disorder, from the north there suddenly appeared in London that unknown factor, Monk. No one knew on which side he came, but all knew that the fact of his coming made all the difference.

And quietly, darkly, behind all this confusion, the large landowners and keepers of the big fortunes had come to an important decision. The despotism of the last decade was not to their liking. It was unwise to allow one of themselves, and a skilled cavalry leader at that, to be at the head of affairs. Though, indeed, their interests had not suffered, it was not the kind of rule that they desired. Their decision was to back Monk, and with him, the bringing back of the King. They would not, of course, restore the popular monarchy, but they would restore Charles. They would not restore what they had destroyed, but they would crown the young Stuart. Those who were in the know in England, knew before the winter of 1659 that the Restoration was coming about, and while the Long Parliament was dissolved, and the rival gang

of plotters were working at high pressure, while the nights were almost noisy with secret conclaves and extraordinary resolutions, the real thing was being staged behind the scenes.

It was truly an extraordinary state of affairs for England. Spies and concealed councils, underground cabals and dark lanterns, a wild riot of Guy Fawkes-like plotting and suspecting; and apart from all this fuss and confusion, the real destiny of the country was almost coldly and with keen calculation being arranged by the magnates and their new ally, Monk. Monk to the ordinary person was still as mysterious, on both sides, or on no side at the same moment and, in any case, a sphinx-like figure, impressive on account of his power, but, still more, because of the prevailing ignorance as to how that power would be used.

The deepness of the intrigue (the central intrigue) was such that, outside the immediate circle of wealthy conspirators, none knew what was happening. The great strength of the real plotters was that they were plotting that which the majority of Englishmen desired: the return of the King. The opinion of the people was all in favour of Charles, and the generals of Cromwell's great army, with their individual ambitions and the memory that they, as a class, evoked, were a crowd or gang, that excited few popular sympathies. England would see them all go without much regret, and the magnates neither needed, nor desired them any longer. In the midst of their planning and plotting for future glory, the officers of the late Parliamentary army were a doomed race. Yet so well was the secret of the real event kept that almost until the eve of the Restoration, Europe did not believe that there was any likelihood of the thing happening. Since Worcester, the continental opinion was that the Stuart cause was lost in all three kingdoms. In France the Stuarts were actually denied residence. Charles was in Spain, knowing just enough to allow him to hope, but not strongly. To be nearer England,

in the possible event of his being asked to cross over, he wished to pass through French territory, and so little did the French Court realize what was about to happen that the permission was refused. James was, in fact, in France, at Boulogne, but even he was in disguise. He was playing another of his little games of hide and seek, hiding in his poverty, and being sought by the authorities for debt. Once more did he hide himself well, and the civic arm was stretched forth to the wrong house (perhaps on purpose) and so he remained in hiding. But the point is, that this was the position of the royal brothers just before the hour struck for their Restoration.

So little did James understand the trend of affairs in England that he chose the interval before the recall to England to get himself entangled with Anne Hyde, the daughter of Edward Hyde, Charles's counsellor in exile, but known to history by his later title, Lord Clarendon. It was at the court of the widowed Princess of Orange that he met her, and the young Duke, new to the company of ladies, fell before her. It was a strange group this that posed for a moment in Holland, the widowed Princess and her small, but old-looking boy, William (James's nephew), Anne Hyde, and James, Duke of York. For the daughter of James and Anne, Mary, was to marry this William of Orange, and the two were to take possession of James's throne and send him away on his second and final exile. The future had prepared much for these persons meeting thus casually at the Hague, but, for the nonce, the group dissolved and the Restoration took place.

The invitation had, at last, gone forth, and Charles, not without surprise, found himself asked to return to England, as King of the three countries. If the news came somewhat as a shock to Charles, on the continent it was received as something of a blow. Here was the impecunious young man whom they had grown tired of, suddenly raised to the throne of a big nation. The attitude of his hosts abruptly changed, and he

must have regarded it with cynical humour. Charles hurried to the Hague, where the States entertained him with unusual magnificence. The English fleet, under Montague, was anchored in the Bay of Schevenig. As soon as the weather permitted, Charles and his company set sail for Dover. At Dover he was met by Monk at the head of the nobility and gentry from the neighbouring counties. The meeting of the King and General Monk was keenly watched by the multitude, and the two were loudly applauded as they rode together in the royal carriage. From Dover to London the journey was one long triumphal procession. Only a few years before, Charles had left that same coast, at a spot a few miles distant, in disguise and danger, a reward offered for his head, and his pursuers just behind his heels. Now all was changed. The roads were filled with people anxious to see the King and to shout for him. His coming meant, at least the end of the late despotism, a time when men were not allowed to shout, nor in fact to collect in crowds. During the Protectorate, the Venetian Ambassador could write that London wore the appearance of a garrison town and that nothing was seen but the marching of soldiers, nothing heard but the sound of drums and trumpets. It was all suddenly changed. The garrison had marched out for the last time. On Blackheath Charles was received by the soldiers with acclamation. From London Bridge to Whitehall he proceeded, the houses hung with tapestry and the route lined by the regulars and the officers who had served under his father, Charles I. At Whitehall the politicians received him with expressions of loyalty ; indeed they did protest over-much. There was ironic meaning in Charles's neat comment : " It must surely have been my fault that I did not come before ; for I have met with no one to-day who did not protest that he always wished for my restoration." To get the full meaning of the remark one must remember the battle of Worcester and the events that followed.

In 1660, then, Charles was recalled from his exile and placed upon the throne of his fathers. The Duke of York's recall was not neglected and he returned to share in the general welcome. Never had the Stuarts been so popular, never were appearances more promising. The country threw off the depression of the Puritans and allowed their spirits to rise, as they had not risen for many a long day. The reaction after the long years of repression and depression followed naturally, and the tone of society altered to suit the Restoration. After the Puritans, England did not become again Merry England, for the grasp on the old ideas had disappeared. When the Puritans cut down the Maypoles, they were cut down for ever. They did not rise again and they could not be restored. The old joys had lost their spontaneity. Charles has been called the Merry Monarch. It is a false title. Neither Merry England nor Merry Monarch appeared again in this country. Charles was often a melancholy monarch, more often an indifferent or resigned monarch, frequently a cynical monarch. But merry he was not; he had learned too much of the world. The old and more innocent joys of the country, moreover, from which merriment naturally arose, had vanished and the pleasures that were introduced to supply their place were not innocent, but guilty; not pleasures so much as passions. But for how much of it had the Puritans to answer, how much were they responsible for the change?

At any rate, fashions altered rapidly and the flowing cloak of the Cavalier took the place of the steeple hat and white cuffs of the Puritans. England took a long leap, and left the dull Protectorate days far behind. One more revolution had happened during the Stuarts' day, and once more the Scottish kings had altered the fashions of their subjects. But Charles and James came back from Europe with broader, deeper minds. They carried with them none of the narrow selfishness of their grandfather, James I,

none of the insular impenetrableness of their father, Charles I. They did not suffer under the drawbacks of their predecessors, but they suffered none the less from a curious limitation engendered by exile, the limitation of having seen and known too much. Each in his special way knew more than it is good for men to know, and each was guided by the knowledge found in exile. It was a weakness.

V

THE CROWN WITHOUT THE GLORY

CHARLES II

The first and most important point to note about the Restoration is that it was not a restoration, but a substitution. It did not restore the popular monarchy that had functioned for six hundred years in this country. What it restored was the person of the late King's son. It restored Charles, but it did not restore kingship. It did not aim at re-creating the ancient institution. Charles came back, not so much to rule, as to be ruled. He returned not as the centre upon which government turned, but as the figure-head of that authority. He was not so much a controller of affairs, as a salaried (and insufficiently salaried) governmental chief; almost as the head of the civil services. He came back not so much as a master, but as a man with masters. It was these masters who had called him back. The machinery of government was left, somewhat doubtfully, in the King's hands, but the control of the machinery, through the Parliament, was from outside. Parliament, indeed, was more than ever the organ of the new powers of wealth; wealth that had been consolidated by recent events and was now abundantly strong. The magnates directed from the various centres, so to speak. To put it in military terms, they held the ring of forts round the country, and the King was unable to move without their consent.

It was the strength, and also the weakness, of the King that he knew when to submit to the authority that had placed him on the throne. He could not move without permission and he seemed, by his

very attitude, to admit the right of his masters thus to dictate to him. He knew that they could strike if they so desired, and he had no wish to face a further period of exile. He did not wish to appeal to arms and to reopen the whole black business that had but recently been closed; he wanted peace and quiet. But having said so much, I have said almost too much, for Charles was always at war with the magnates, and before the end of his reign he had contrived, for a few brief years, to free himself from the influence of the big fortunes. But the whole point about the King's war with the wealthy was that it was a narrow or inner kind of war, never a national one. It was a war of points and particles, of playing off one big individual against another, or of developing unknown, or at least unsuspected resources with which to resist attack. Charles II was never in the position of Charles I. Charles I could appeal to the nation, even if he lost by such an appeal. The situation of Charles II was entirely different. He could make no such appeal. He was forced to judge with the politician's, rather than the statesman's, eye; to look forward to to-morrow, but not so far as the day after that. He could only take a narrow view, for his kingship rested on a narrow basis, one that had been limited by others. It was only with the present and with the immediate future that he could allow himself to deal. His outlook was dimmed, his horizon very close.

It was in the judgment of men that Charles excelled. He was able to look into their souls and thus to understand them. He knew them better, perhaps, than they knew themselves. He had an eye everywhere, an ear everywhere, and what he saw he understood, despite the deceit of appearances; what he heard he fathomed, despite the guile of words. It is this cynical, or creepy, detachment, this grasping of motives rather than actions, that leads me to suggest that Charles knew too much, as a result of the searching experiences of exile.

The lever of control that the magnates were able to move against the King was, of course, that of finance. Charles lacked even the nominal income of his father. He could neither employ men, nor buy, nor build, without leave from the large merchants and squires. What permanent revenue remained to the Crown at the Restoration was destroyed, and in its place appeared an insufficient income based upon taxes levied on the masses. The object of this meagre income was to place the King (like his father) in such a position that he should be compelled to come to the magnates each time he needed money. One other supply they gave him, the Customs dues. It was a grant for life, granted indeed because of its smallness, flung at him almost with contempt. But during the reign the revenue from the Customs expanded in a way that had plainly not been foreseen by his opponents, and probably not by the King. Overseas trade, however, was rapidly growing and colonial adventure was beginning to bring forth its new and surprising results. The Customs dues crept steadily up, and the King reaped the golden harvest. Carefully he watched and developed this resource, and before the end it was almost equal to the strain of floating him independently.

Another source of income, and one that has been dismissed without proper consideration, was that known as " subsidy from an ally." It was with great delicacy and discrimination that Charles used his power to obtain this kind of subsidy, and it was well used to the advantage of this country. The position of England as a balance between the two great European divisions (France and her allies on the one hand, Spain, Holland, Austria on the other) enabled Charles to support one or the other—at a price. It was due to his skilful diplomacy that he was able to extract income from Europe, and yet hold himself free to move and throw his weight on either side, as the occasion demanded. He refused definitely simply to side with one great European group. He

was never the permanent ally of France or of Holland, but his support of one side or the other was always to the advantage of England. The importance of this country, moreover, under Charles, and especially on account of the capital navy, planned and brought into being by the Duke of York, made it of considerable value to either great group in turn, and though they were willing to pay for such support, they never paid as much as the advantage was worth to them. Charles's understanding of European affairs was far superior to that of his immediate predecessors. We must go back as far as Wolsey to find a mind equally capable of grasping continental intricacies and complexities. It was one benefit of the long exile. The adroitness with which Charles used his knowledge is interesting to observe. On the occasion, for instance, when France and Holland were allied, for the moment, against Spain (1665), Charles sent out his new navy under James, his brother, and defeated the alliance on the seas. In 1667, he signed the peace with Holland just at the time that the Franco-Dutch alliance was on the point of being abandoned. To a far-seeing eye this was a sort of challenge to Louis of France, but the alliance that followed a few years later, of England, Holland and Sweden, was not a *sort* of challenge to Louis, but a very definite peril to him. It placed the French King in the position of very earnestly desiring the support of England. It made the breaking up of the alliance a thing for which Louis was only too willing to pay. But when France did offer financial recompense to Charles, it found that country a temporary ally only, for Charles still held himself free to change his policy to suit future circumstances. The payment was extremely useful to the English King, but Louis was far more willing to pay than was Charles to accept.[1]

In all Charles's dealing with his allies one finds a cool and steady mind at work among factors that he understood, and thus in striking contrast with the

[1] The money was mainly expended on the Navy.

foreign policy of this country during the decade before the Restoration. Two things are kept perpetually in view, the maintaining of the remains of kingship in his own hands, and the using of the name, or weight, of his country, to England's political advantage. By his deft handling, the last dignity of the Crown was upheld, and even a precarious period of independence purchased. Moreover, England was once again playing a big part in European affairs and Charles always worked so that he was able to reverse a policy if necessary.

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The early days of the Restoration were given up to general rejoicing. The populace rejoiced in the return of the King and in what seemed to it the restoration of their old, popular Monarchy. The true facts of this return were hidden from the people. They only saw that the King's son was on the throne, and that the crown of three kingdoms was on his head. If any had doubted as to the popularity of the Puritans, here was the answer given. The leader of the highly-paid soldiery was gone and the army of the veterans no longer banded together. As soon as the military force or pressure was removed, the whole fabric crumbled. Puritan England fell to pieces, literally to pieces; for it was only the fragments here and there that retained their Puritanism. The rest of the country rejoiced, seeing in the restoration of the King the commencement of a new era; one that should, in fact, be the reappearance of a much older era; a time that accorded better with the customs and traditions of the people of England.

The enemies of the King, lately so powerful, seemed to fade away as the Royalist triumph was everywhere celebrated with the liveliest expressions of public joy. The bonfires blazed and the bells pealed, and with the appearance of Charles in the metropolis, they blazed the higher, and pealed the louder. It was a very different coming from that of his grandfather nearly sixty years earlier, for when the first James reached

London, so ill was the report that travelled before him that the enthusiasm had expended itself before he appeared. But Charles was a man of pleasing manners and who knew when to be regal and when to unbend. It is another way of saying that he was a consummate actor, which his grandfather most certainly was not. James I had one pose, or knew how to strike a certain attitude, but Charles had learned in adversity how to be all things to all men. It was not an amiable trait, nor did it make for sincerity, but it was a most useful attribute at the time of the Restoration, and it was one of the real talents that his brother James did not possess. James, Duke of York, could only be himself, and if you didn't like James, why there was an end to it. But Charles could be a whole host of people, and if you disliked one, why, perhaps little Nell Gywnn liked another. . . .

One result of this indiscriminate joy was an intense desire on the part of the Royalists to satisfy old ideas of revenge, to get even, as it were, with their late foes. It was the second side of the triumph, the putting of the advice of the National Anthem into practice. The punishment of those guilty of the death of Charles I was, however, spectacular, rather than actively repressive, even though it was a horrible spectacle. Very few of the regicides really suffered and none of the powerful ones, but the Royalists permitted themselves to dig up the bodies of Cromwell, Ireton and Bradshaw, and to hang them on the gallows at Tyburn, on the anniversary of the death of Charles I. It was a silly proceeding, a typical piece of extravagance, but the expression of a mood that most people would understand. Modern sensitiveness has made much more of the freak than it deserves.[1] To say that "for the ferocity of these proceedings there can be no palliation," and that "it was a degradation of any possible human code" is clearly to misunderstand, not only the age of the Restoration, but also the whole period of the Commonwealth and of the Protectorate.

[1] See *Mr. Charles, King of England,* by John Drinkwater.

One does not use such language for the cruelties and barbarisms that accompanied Cromwell and marked his progress, and they were accompanied with biblical quotations. At least the Royalists brought no Bible with them when they hung up the dead Cromwell. For most people in England, the withering away of the despotism that acted in the name of Puritanism, the sudden and unexpected decay of that thing that had seemed inhumanly strong, came with a crushing and confusing relief. There was a quick and bewildered rebound of spirits.

We have seen the same kind of thing happen in our own day, for the thrilling news of the signing of the Armistice in 1918 was a spiritual release of just such a character. A tense strain was abruptly snapped, and human control was scarcely capable of maintaining the balance of the individual. The follies that followed the ending of the Great War we all know; most of us, let us hope, from personal experience, and if we did not dig up and expose our enemies, do not let it be forgotten how keen the majority was on carrying out the advice to "Hang the Kaiser"; upon which slogan, indeed, an election was won. If Cromwell and the rest, the heads of the late regime, were ultimately hung at Tyburn, it was upon one occasion only, and that the anniversary of the date upon which they had put to death the man whom most Englishmen regarded as sacred and above the law. It was on one occasion that it happened, on one date, not every year when the same date came round, as was the case with poor Guy Fawkes, for instance. Fawkes was tortured and put to death for the crimes he was not even allowed to commit, and, as if that were not enough, he has been burned yearly ever since. Yet the sensitive people who are shocked at the Cromwell incident are seldom to be seen tearing the Guys limb from limb on the 5th of November.

Another matter of considerable embarrassment to the newly-established monarchy was the question of the compensation of the Royalist followers. Since

the year 1642, a large portion of the landed property in every county had passed from the hands of the original owners into the possession of new owners. Now, the new owners were, in most cases, very large owners in the first instance, and the newly-acquired property, granted or purchased at a nominal figure, had merely succeeded in swelling their already large possessions. In other words, the large owners who had called Charles back to England were the present owners of the landed property that had been confiscated from the Royalists, whom it was now Charles's duty to recompense. It was a wretched position for the King to find himself in, for the new owners were not going to part with an acre of their present property; they had not invited Charles to return with that purpose in view, while the poverty-stricken Royalists, many of whom had accompanied and embarrassed Charles in his exile, naturally looked to the King to secure for them what they termed "justice." The question was still further complicated by the fact that the large owners were not only holding on to their estates, but also relying on their own ascendancy and strength to add to their possessions, by the taking over of common grounds and by the general policy of advancing fences. At the same time, it is well to remember that many a Royalist was magnifying his own claims in proportion to his suffering or his ambition, and making the most exorbitant demands on the good will of his sovereign. One set of men had brought the King back, and they were men of wealth and substance; the other set had served his cause and himself while in exile, and they were, consequently, an impoverished lot. Given these factors, it is easy to see what conclusion would inevitably be reached—and for the most part the returning Royalists retired beaten from the field, or rather Court.

Another side of the same question was the problem of the restoration of the lands belonging to the bishops, deans, chapters, etc.—the Church lands, appro-

priated during the late regime or interregnum. It was really the question of the restoration of the hierarchy on a reasonable basis, and was attended with all the difficulties that the equal question of the compensation of the Cavaliers evoked. The Puritans had purified the Church from the stain of episcopacy and had granted or sold the lands, the property of the Church of England, in divers directions. With the fading out of the Puritans, however, the bishops automatically returned, and, therefore, must be established again with dignity and possessions. In the case of the Church, most of the lands did really find their way back to the English Establishment. The weight of the Crown was just sufficient to secure that—but not without concessions and compensations.

Still, the Church of England was once more set up by the State of England, and that in itself was a sharp and vigorous decision, carried out with determination. It was a step thrown still more strikingly into relief by comparison with the inability of Mary Tudor one hundred years earlier to carry through the same design. When Mary re-established the old religion in England, after the death of Edward VI, she was not powerful enough to restore the old Church lands (abbey possessions, etc.) to their former owners. The lands that Henry VIII and Thomas Cromwell[1] had taken, remained in alien hands and, consequently, there was no real strength in Mary's religious policy, which indeed, after a halt of indecision, collapsed under the reign of her sister, Elizabeth. It was, in fact, these very lands of the old Church that had created the new millionaires who stood round the monarchy until they surrounded it and compelled its surrender. And the importance of the point here is, that it was during the Stuart period that the investing of the throne was finally accomplished. We have called it the real tragedy of the Stuarts that they were brought to the English throne at the time that it was undermined. The crash came and they fell, carrying

[1] The Lord Protector's ancestor.

their ruined cause away with them beyond the seas. It is due to the courage of the line that it died fighting, and it is with the final fight and defeat of the Stuarts that this volume shall close.

Sufficient has been said to indicate in what manner the early days of the Restoration were harassed by the bland imperturbability of the wealthy, and the shrill, protesting tactics of the impoverished Cavaliers, by the necessity under which the monarchy was of reaffirming the constitutional importance of the hierarchy, and the desire of the Crown to convey no particular offence by its measures to secure that end. If, before passing to the memorable happenings in Charles II's reign, it be added that the person principally concerned in dealing with the two problems, the problem of the Church and that of the Cavaliers, was Edward Hyde, soon to be known by the more famous name of Clarendon, it will be realized why that unfortunate man was so speedily to be overwhelmed with unpopularity.

The most outstanding work in the reign of King Charles II was the formation of the national Navy. It was almost entirely the work of his brother, the Duke of York, and but for the unfortunate episode of James II's reign, he would almost certainly be reckoned among the nation's heroes, his column as high as Nelson's; for it was James Stuart who made Nelson possible.[1]

With the attempt of Charles I to found a Navy, we have already dealt. Charles did have the satisfaction to see the thing in being, and then it collapsed with his own fortunes, wrecked, one might say, on the rock of "Ship Money." Nevertheless, the fleet he had created helped largely to defeat him. At the outbreak of the Civil War, in 1642, the Parliament controlled nearly all the seaports and also London. Charles's own ships were manned against the King, and the

[1] The present Duke of York column, standing near Waterloo Place might well be converted into a memorial to James II, instead of the Regent's brother, whole sole distinction was that he led armies, and never won a battle.

seamen were paid high wages to secure their disloyalty. During the Cromwellian interlude, a considerable naval force was kept in being. A large amount of money was devoted to the armed forces during the absence of monarchy, since it was upon such strength that the Commonwealth must rely.

But no Navy was as yet created, no continuous or permanent body, yet in being. During the period of disorder, for example, that intervened between Cromwell's death and the recall of the Stuarts, the Navy was not heard of. The occasion earned it no credit, whatsoever. The old idea still prevailed that when ships were urgently needed, they must simply be gathered together, a crew assembled somehow or anyhow, and munitions provided—if possible. And so with a lusty cheer, or more probably a deep curse, the fleet put to sea. The consequence was that between Sluys (1340) and the Restoration, England could boast of no real naval history, but only of haphazard sea skirmishes and individual adventures.[1] The idea of a standing Navy, of men and ships being retained in the nation's service while there was no threat of invasion or menace of war, was an idea totally foreign to Englishmen. England was not yet a sea power, but from the date of James taking over control at the Admiralty, all was changed, and the naval history proper of England began.

James was a man of great industry, at home, in camp, on the field of battle, or even in the council chamber. He loved the strenuous life; to be doing something was his great joy. Deprived of the military career on his return from exile, he seemed naturally to turn towards the Admiralty. Since his youth he had been of right High Lord Admiral of England (for there were admirals before there was a navy), and at Schevenig, when the royal brothers turned once more towards England and the end of their

[1] The defeat of the Spanish Armada is, of course, the exception, but the wind and heavy seas had much to do with that; or such was contemporary opinion.

wanderings, the fleet sailed under the High Admiral's flag. But James was not the type of man to sit down and allow himself to be called admiral when there was no navy for him to command ; just as later he would not sit on a throne and be called King when the reins of government were in the hands of others.

With the energy and concentration of the man of single purpose, James threw himself into his new work. The old Stuart difficulty, want of money, was at the time and, wonderful to relate, not pressing. Though no fixed revenue was provided for the Navy, an income had been granted to the King, and of the total financial power of the Crown, two-thirds was allocated to the fleet, to its equipment and provisioning and to the restoration of the two main naval store depots, that of the Thames and of Portsmouth.

The next step was the establishment of professional sailors, permanently in the nation's employ. It was a revolutionary step, the real step in the founding of the Royal Navy. From the ships' officers available at the Restoration, a proportion was selected as both loyal and efficient. These were then formally engaged and given a guarantee of continuous employment whether the times were of peace or of war. Whether they were wanted or not, whether they remained on ship or on shore, a certain salary became their due. It was increased while they were actively and perilously employed, but all the while it was there, and at its lowest it was sufficient to maintain the sailor, or in the language of to-day, to provide a living wage.

The nucleus having thus been created, it remained to find that which should cluster round and give body to the whole. It was necessary to provide for recruitment, so that a steady supply of men should be assured to the service. To meet this demand, the Duke instituted a system of service that should commence with boyhood. The officer in the new Navy should start as a boy and be trained for the sea. He should grow up in the service, and his class would

thus provide a constant stream of naval experts to officer the fleet. The youths who were so enlisted in the new way were given the title of "King's Letter Boys" or "Volunteers." Later the name was altered to Midshipmen, which it still remains. Moreover, the system was open to everybody. No one was barred from becoming a volunteer on account of his lowly origin.

James further set up an entirely new system of administration, a system that advances unbrokenly from his day to the naval administration of to-day. Each separate link in his long chain James defined and rendered workable. He took ideas from the past, he brought in ideas that he had picked up from his observation on the continent, and where no ideas were to be found, he invented them himself. He built up his organization, planning and personally attending to details as he went along, until there appeared, at last, an armed force, larger in numbers and greater in usefulness; in fine, infinitely superior to anything that had gone before.

With such ruthless zeal did James apply himself to the task of raising a Navy that the whole thing was completed within about a year of the Restoration. It was a prodigious piece of work, which only the untiring energy of the man and his strange appetite for industry could accomplish. His industry was amazing. Indeed, it was by some thought a folly. Why, they argued, should a man of the Duke's eminence so work himself? Truly work was not then the fashion in James's class, but James cared nothing for fashion. Hour after hour would he sit working with his pen, and between his clerical labours he was away visiting ships and docks, checking accounts, suggesting improvements and seeing that they were carried out. He produced his book of rules for the sea force, reducing the chaos of different rules that had gone before to order, and he laid down his laws of discipline. In short, he did everything, because he was willing and able to do anything.

But it was not enough for James to create a Navy, he must also be a sailor. Had he not been so obviously suited to the military life, one would be tempted to say that he was a born sailor. At any rate, he absorbed the tradition of the sea and soon learned to make his home on the waves. He became a great master of seacraft, and a judge of ships. He adapted his vessels to suit the conditions of his day, devised changes in rigging and gear, and so on. In the matter of design, likewise, he displayed a wise judgment, and in this matter his interest was shared by his brother the King. Charles was fascinated by the art of designing ships, himself a skilled experimentalist, whose experience served many useful purposes. Shipbuilding was one of his pastimes. Moreover, he appreciated the stern necessity of a first-class Navy, fully understanding the power of foreign navies, and he was among the first to realize how vital it was to provide protection for the newly growing, long distance trade. The royal brothers saw (and at a time when others did not see) that the sea power was, at least, as important to England as the land army, and it cannot be said that the magnates who had brought them back understood the thing at all. They were not yet awake to the value of sea-power, nor to the special conditions of the day and their relation to England and its prosperity. It was left for their descendants, the Aristocracy of the eighteenth century, to appreciate the true position and to keep together and develop that arm that had been created by the Duke of York the very year after he was allowed to return to his own country. The true importance of the Navy was fully realized within a long life-time of its actual establishment, but by that time James had been forgotten, and his great work obscured. It is curious, nevertheless, to observe how clear-sighted the Stuarts were on this particular point.

At the beginning of the Navy, then, stands James, Duke of York, the founder of that which was to be the Englishman's chief pride, that which was, in

fact, to be the sign and symbol of England's success for more than two centuries. It has been the secret of power and the source of strength. For two hundred years it has been peculiarly England's glory, and for the second of these hundred years it rode the waves supreme, while the country was immune from, almost contemptuous of, outside aggression.[1] From Nelson's last battle right down to the Great War the English Navy was unchallenged : a fit tribute to its originator.

Before passing on to the use to which the new navy was put and, from that, to the disgrace into which it was for a period allowed to fall, it is chronologically necessary to allude to the marriages of the royal brothers. Of James's preference for Anne Hyde, note has already been taken. When the royal family returned to England, Anne followed. She had already been promised marriage, the document dated and signed. On the third of September, 1660, they were married in the dead of night at her father's house. Old Edward Hyde, it should be recorded, was very much set against the marriage and begged the King to forbid it. On the 22nd of October their first child was born. Altogether eight children came of that union, but all died young saving two, and those two lived to be Queens of England. Mary was born in 1662, and Anne in 1664.

The marriage, however, could not long be kept secret. It was soon being whispered at Court that James was wed to a lady of inferior rank, to Anne, daughter of the Chancellor, Hyde. The unpleasant duty of James was now to break the news to mother, and the poor old mother, Henrietta Maria, who had at last returned to her husband's country, but not to her husband, stormed and raged at the idea of a lawyer's daughter married to her son and, perhaps, one day to sit on her throne ! Luckless Henrietta Maria. Fate was not kind to the woman. After ten years of exile accentuated by poverty she had, at length, come back to something like her rightful

[1] The term " splendid isolation " springs naturally to the mind.

position, and this was among the earliest information that greeted her with reassurances for the future. Not many more blows had fortune designed to disturb the little, dark, princess of the house of France. She had already experienced the worst. Of her death, that occurred soon after, Mademoiselle de Montpensier was to write : " She could not sleep, the doctors gave her a pill to cure her wakefulness, which it did so thoroughly that she never woke again." But now Henrietta must be placated and her son Charles, persuaded, and James found life for a while very trying. But before the year was out, the Duchess was acknowledged. She was accepted at Court and took her place with an ease and grace that astonished and, in the end, pleased. Not only did she suit her new rank, but she showed herself superior in most ways to those born to it. And as the years passed and left Charles, the King, without an heir, her position seemed more fixed and firm. Her husband's respect for her never altered. She guided him through the ten years of their married life. His infelicities could not but distress her—they also distressed him—but her influence over James's rather set and isolated mind was always for good.

In 1662 Charles was married to Catherine of Braganza, Infanta of Portugal. It was a marriage made to please Charles's subjects, rather than to please Charles himself. It was a union unattended with results, and the parties seemed to separate with a certain natural accord, remaining courteous and friendly to one another, rather than considering themselves as man and wife. Indeed the tale of mistresses fills the life of Charles rather largely at this period, though not nearly as much as has been represented. It began with the Countess of Castlemain, Lady Barbara, or as she became later Duchess of Cleveland. Louise Renée de Keronalle followed, to be known to history as the Duchess of Portsmouth. There was also, of course, Moll Davis, and no one is ever likely to forget shingled, vivacious Nell Gwynn.

But it has been too easily assumed that mistresses took up a large portion of Charles's life. In truth, they were his recreations after strenuous days. They did not so much monopolize his time as his playtime. His interests were many, his accomplishments great. Mathematics, the arts, science and ship-building, each had its share in his life, nor were these put aside to make room for the mistresses, though one would hesitate to say that the mistresses were not, on occasion, put aside to make room for a scientific experiment or an exercise in mathematics.

Though the royal brothers had shared much in common and followed each other in events, exile, battle, marriage, mistresses, ships, and so on, their characters were utterly contrasted at almost every point. The love and respect which they entertained profoundly for one another was founded on entirely different qualities. In the early days, when Charles had learned to know despair, it is doubtful if James understood the emotion. Kingship meant to James what it had meant to his father, and a king had no right to despair. The changes that were introduced at the Restoration were fully realized by Charles. He understood them well enough to work to preserve the appearances of a King, even though he was not a King, and sufficiently to fight his masters and even to secure a temporary victory and a modicum of independence and real kingship before the end. It is improbable that James ever grasped the significance of the changes that had been brought about, or saw the direction in which the lords were going. He did not realize how low the Crown had fallen, nor how high the wealthy families had risen. The realities of the situation escaped him, but not Charles.

There was, too, a difference in their degrees of industry, though both were men of activity. But the very grasp of Charles on fact, the very contact he had with reality, made him less inclined to *waste* energy. He saw that the old power of the Crown was gone and calculated that no amount of industrious

application could restore the popular monarchy to its old glory. Therefore, he paused in his labour or sought distraction. It was partly the man's nature, but there was also reason for it. James, on the other hand, saw no reason to refrain from working with all his energy, for he did not know that the monarchy was broken beyond repair. He could only do his best, he knew no other method, and he did it morning, noon and night. Whatever the work, whatever the conditions, he gave himself fully to the job on hand, planning, writing, reviewing, examining. He made no pause till the thing was done, but Charles was first apt to ask himself whether it was worth the doing.

Again, in the case of adventures, James revelled in them, whereas Charles had had more forced on him in his earlier life than he desired. He had known so much discomfort that he longed to be at ease, and when, at length, he found that his situation was tolerably comfortable, he was content to leave further discomfort to others. Hardship in life he had known so intimately that he now knew (at least) what to avoid. But James was temperamentally different. He heard the wild call of adventure and longed to follow. Comfort meant nothing to him when adventure was in the wind. He preferred the harshness of the camp or the confinement of the ship's cabin, to the luxury of the court. While there remained something dangerous to do, or something difficult to accomplish, the conditions under which he was forced to do it weighed nothing with him, were not even noticed by him.

In their dealings with men, likewise, the brothers were equally distinct. Charles knew men, in the sense of having found them out. He could afford to be cynical about them, because he could read their souls. James never knew more than one man, and that man was himself. He did not know that there were types of men. Of course, he knew that there were black men and white, good and bad, but all shades and

subtleties were lost on him. Charles despised men and used them—when they, in turn, were not merely using him. He employed his knowledge and craft to hold together the threads of kingship that remained, the fragments of the monarchy, and the appearance of the King. James, on the contrary, did not realize that monarchy in England was reduced to fragments. He thought that men were loyal, generally speaking, because he was loyal, patriotic because he was patriotic, and so forth. He judged by his own standard because it was his only standard, but Charles judged by that lack of standard that he found in the country. James was thus moving in a world that did not exist outside himself. He took appearances for the reality; but Charles was not so deceived.

Even in their attraction towards the Catholic Church, the two brothers were separated. Both came to believe that it was the true Church, but Charles did not make his declaration on that account. He wished to stir up no strife because of his private convictions, to sacrifice nothing to his conscience. He deferred his declaration of faith until it could do him no harm to make it. It was only on his death-bed that he made his convictions clear, though he had been convinced that it ought to be his religion for half his life-time. James, from a deep distaste of the Catholic religion, found himself carried away and convinced, almost in spite of himself, by his reason, and having been led to what he considered truth, he must needs brave all perils and openly proclaim himself. With the disastrous effect of his conversion upon his position we shall deal shortly. At present it is sufficient to note what manner of man was this James and how sharply he differed from his more politic but pliable brother. Opposition stiffened James, while Charles knew not only when, but how to bend. Charles knew the value of compromise, but to James, half measures were akin to treason. But one might multiply these differences indefinitely.

No half measures, in any case, were called for on the 3rd of June, 1665, when James led his new Navy out to its great victory—the first of a long line of successes that may not even yet have concluded—off Lowestoft. The Navy had not been created too soon, but almost too late, for the near and new commercial development of Holland threw a dark shadow of challenge across the deep waters. The origin of the Dutch war was of course commercial, but the more immediate excuse was the turning of New Amsterdam[1] into New York, which latter name, at least, perpetuates the glory of James, Duke of York.

It was on Sunday morning, 3rd of June, that the rival fleets touched. On the previous Friday, James had put to sea with eighty-eight sail of the line and four fire-ships. On the same day he had learned that the Dutch, with 113 sail, had been sighted. They had put to sea in seven divisions, under the command of the renowned Opdam. Despite his superiority in numbers, Opdam did not desire to fight for he doubted the issue. He had, however, received orders from the politicians that the trial must be faced, for the domestic situation in Holland at that moment demanded either a naval victory, or a hard-fought action that should offer a fair excuse for the lack of victory. Still, with the wind in his favour, the Dutch admiral hesitated, but when on the Sunday morning the wind had veered round in favour of the English, why, then Opdam must either fight or turn about and make an unspectacular dash for safe harbour. With the English bearing down upon him on the wind, he decided to stay and fight.

The two long lines of ships faced each other some forty miles out from Lowestoft, and in the grey dawn the guns opened fire. The English fleet was in three divisions, the northernmost commanded by that man of many wars, Prince Rupert, the southern by Lord Sandwich, while the centre was led by the Duke

[1] Originally an English settlement, the Dutch had captured and re-christened it New Amsterdam.

in person. Slowly the two fleets came together, sailing past one another, exchanging short broadsides as they passed. The superiority of the English fire was early marked. From side to side they went, Rupert first leading the van, and then, when they had crossed, both fleets turned about to repeat the movement from the opposite sides, Sandwich now leading the English, Rupert bringing up the rear. By the time that this slow operation had been repeated once more, it was evident that the Dutch were heavily damaged. The English short-range cannonading had had its effect, and the Dutch leading ship now came up dubiously. James decided that the moment was ripe to hammer home his advantage. He ordered his whole line to run parallel with the Dutch, not to pass them this time, but to hold to close quarters. He set the example by leading in his own flagship (it was the *Royal Charles*) and delivering the full weight of his fire into the opposing Dutchman. So finely were the English guns handled that the Dutch could no longer properly direct their ships.

James went into the fight with that enthusiasm that marked his every action and at one moment at least his situation was one of special peril. Two of his own squadron had dropped out to refit, and he found himself thus left for a while alone. A concentration of Dutch fire was immediately directed on the isolated *Royal Charles*. During the storm, a chain shot from the Dutch falling on the flagship killed at one blow most of the group standing round the Duke. Lord Falmouth, Lord Muskerry and Burlington's son, Boyle, were killed by the shot and the Duke was covered by the blood of his friends. But gradually the disabled ships had resumed their places in the line and the fire of the enemy began to slacken. Opposite James was the *Eendracht*, with Opdam's flag, and those who watched thought that the directness of the English fire was causing some confusion on board. Observing these signs, James ordered all his guns to bear on the Dutch flagship, not in the broadside manner

but gun following gun in one continuous discharge. At the third shot from the lower tier the *Eendracht* blew up with all her crew, five hundred men and the Admiral Opdam himself.

Taking place as this disaster did in the very centre of the battle, with the Dutch already severely mauled, it decided the conflict. The enemy fleet became utterly disorganized, and the ships in the centre of the line and, therefore, nearest the calamity, broke away and fled before the wind, leaving a huge gap in their formation. James immediately seized the opportunity to cut right through his enemy's line.

The line now broken, the battle became a series of detached actions, the Dutch striving only to break away and run for their own coast. Their disorderly retirement was guarded by Van Tromp (son of the famous admiral), who fought an admirable rearguard action despite the confusion. Darkness fell with the Dutch in full retreat and the Duke in hot pursuit. The race was one through the night and it is possible that the Dutch would have been caught up and destroyed, but for a strange accident; an accident of a sort that another than James might have taken to heart and learned to defeat in the future. It was a sign of what was to happen later when James was King.

The leading vessel in the pursuit was the *Royal Charles*, James's flagship, and the rest of the fleet guided itself and took its bearing from the leader. No ship must pass the flagship in the race. James, who had been in the thick of the action all the long day, from dawn to dusk, seized the opportunity of the chase to go below and rest. While he was thus reposing, one of his gentlemen, Bronkhard, approached the master of the ship (John Harman) and ordered him to abandon the pursuit. Harman was astonished, and well might he be, since there appeared no reason for any such action. He refused to shorten sail until his order was confirmed. Bronkhard then went away for a while and returning, said that the order

was confirmed by the Duke. With reluctance Harman slackened speed and, since no vessel of the fleet must go beyond the flagship's light, the rest of the vessels likewise slowed down. The Dutch made away through the night and anchored safely in the Texel.

Now, James never gave that order to halt the pursuit. It was to him as stunning as it had been to Harman. The work was wholly that of Bronkhard. And who was this Bronkhard? He was a man of considerable influence and power and a member of the wealthy group that composed the House of Commons. In other words, he was safe; a man who could not be touched. Why he thus held up the pursuit, whether it was to save the Dutch or merely to save himself from the peril of further action—he had been very much afraid during the battle of the 3rd June the day before—was never explained. For, when later a move was made for a court-martial to enquire into the mystery of Bronkhard, the House of Commons took up his case. Delays were engineered and time wasted on forms. Bronkhard was advised to absent himself for a while, which he did, betaking himself to France. Delays are proverbially dangerous, especially when they are filled with such crushing disasters as the Plague and the Fire of London, and later still, well, it was found impossible to revive the old business. In the popular phrase, Bronkhard "got away with it." But, at any rate, if James had a chance of completing his victory over the Dutch and putting the fleet out of action, it was defeated by this man of means. Bronkhard's precise interest in the matter remains a secret—but the Dutch got safely away.

James was not born lucky. His big success had launched the British Navy on its long voyage of victory, and he returned a national hero. Yet he was never lucky. Even at the time he was leading forth his new ships against the Dutch, the Plague had made its appearance in London. Towards the end of May

it had started in the parish of St. Giles. By the time the Duke returned victorious, the tale of the terrible mortality in the metropolis, claiming ten thousand victims a week, so 'tis said, was filling the country with wild alarm and distress, but also robbing the sailor Duke of his just praise. At another time the country would have been thrown into frenzies of excitement and joy by the victory over the national enemy of the day, the Dutch, but now the bells tolled a slower tune, and England only waited with anxiety to learn whether the pestilence would spread. The Dutch casualties amounted to no less than 7,000 men and four admirals, as against the English loss of 600; figures that spoke for themselves, yet the cry of 1665 was not in favour of the Duke, but rather, "Bring out your dead." All who could manage it were fleeing from London, but the elderly Monk remained at his post.

The story of the Great Plague that ravaged the city, and of the vast Fire that burned it out, of the planning of the new London and of the interests that refused to allow the real plans to be carried out, of the monument crowned with the iron mop, put up to remind people of the Fire (which it doesn't), and of the lying inscription placed later at its base, of the falsehoods of Defoe and of the facts of Evelyn and Pepys—and which are the more accurate, the facts or the falsehoods, no man can tell—of all these fascinating matters the account will not be discovered here. We are interested in following the fortunes or misfortunes of the House of Stuart, and even the vision of the Thames on fire that men of that day saw, must not draw us from our path. The two great events of 1665 and 1666 certainly did cause so much attention that James and his victory were not seen to their full advantage. But, quite apart from these calamities, James was not allowed to follow up his initial advantage and, with his new Navy, sweep the Dutch from the seas. He was withdrawn by superior authority from active command at sea. The reputation he

had begun to make for himself was thus killed at its birth. It was the result of a most important decision that King Charles took, and probably very rightly took, despite the consequences to the realm and to his brother that followed from taking the best sailor from the seas. The truth was that Charles was fearful of the peril in which his brother ran through his active command of the Navy. Charles's marriage remained childless and James was thus the heir to the throne. But if anything happened to James, then the heir was the Duke's tiny daughter, now barely three years old. Knowing full well on what a slender tenure he (Charles) held his own throne, and remembering all too plainly the time when he did not hold it at all, it is scarcely surprising that the King looked with misgiving at James and his naval adventures. The question that faced Charles was, should he fcllow up the national conquest of the seas and sweep the Dutch from them and possibly lose his own brother and heir in the contest, or should he see to it that someone remained to carry on the fight for the recovery of the English Crown when he should be no more? He chose to sacrifice the supremacy of the seas, for the Duke was the only man of the time really capable of leading his own Navy.

Forming his judgment thus on the situation as Charles saw it, it is difficult to say that he was not right. He knew all about James, and realized that the man revelled in perils and risks that an heir to the throne had no reason to run. We have seen James on board the *Royal Charles*, standing up while the men who formed the group about him were being scattered like leaves before the wind. Another such engagement might easily be fatal to James. At any rate, so thought Charles, and he concluded that not only his brother, but the relics of monarchy that he might soon be called upon to uphold, were much safer at home. The active command passed to Lord Sandwich, and with it the chance that England had of putting her national rival and the disturber of

her foreign trade, out of the fight. It deprived that generation of naval supremacy, and nearly broke James's heart.

It has been suggested that Charles recalled his brother from the Navy because he was jealous of the popularity of the victor of Lowestoft. It has been hinted that Charles was acutely annoyed by the success of his brother. No one who understands the character of Charles or the conditions in this country can echo the curious sentiment. Charles's action was wholly politic, and seems, on the face of it, wise and necessary.

For the time being, certainly, James was enjoying a measure of popularity, in spite of the disaster of the Plague. Even Parliament, that was seldom generous where a Stuart was concerned, felt compelled to vote him a sum of one hundred and twenty thousand pounds in recognition of his splendid conduct in the battle on the seas. But the very next year they followed up their one act of generosity with an example of the opposite sort. They cut off supplies from the fleet. Lack of assistance and the impossibility of securing financial support from the Parliament, for the moment, broke the strength of the new Navy, so finely organized and so successfully handled. All the main ships had to be laid up, and the Dutch—whom policy had left undefeated—seized the opportunity to sail up the Thames. To the disgrace of England they entered the river with contemptuous ease, burning as they advanced and threatening even London itself. This threat to the capital was a strange conclusion to the victory off Lowestoft. But perhaps it is stranger still that the official text-book of history never forgets to mention the disgrace of the Dutch in the Medway, but seldom remembers to mention the glory of the Navy off Lowestoft. The disaster that happened under the Stuarts is recorded, though its cause is not given, while the great victory under the Stuarts, organized and led by a Stuart, is ignored. It is strange.

One result of the triple disaster, Plague, Fire and War, and one in each of three successive years, was the fall of Clarendon. Popular opinion demanded a scapegoat, someone whom the nation could make to suffer for all its own suffering—and what matter that the victim had been powerless to avert any of the country's disasters? Clarendon was not well liked either by the people or by his equals, and Charles sacrificed him; some say too easily, though it is clear that the King had grown very tired of him, and, still worse, was bored with him. They had been together in exile, Charles Stuart and Edward Hyde, as he then was, and in those days Hyde had been the teacher and Charles the unwilling pupil. But when they were both recalled to England with the tide of the Restoration, Hyde did not always realize that he was no longer the teacher. He felt himself a sort of second father to the Stuart exiles who had lost their own parent; a most awkward relationship between people in any case, but quite preposterous when one of them had become a king and the other was his prime minister. Hyde was of the landed gentry by birth, and a lawyer, that is on the other side of the great struggle between the King and the great landlords. He had served Charles I usefully rather than whole-heartedly, for his feeling was with his own people and against the institution of the popular monarchy. After the Restoration, he served the new Charles faithfully and he served him well, but he would have the King follow his advice and (still worse) he would have the King listen to him. It is one of the defects of the cynic that he is easily bored.

But now that national affairs were at a crisis, when to Pestilence and Fire had been added the burning disgrace of a recently defeated foe advancing unmolested far into the country, the fall of Clarendon was convenient. His great wealth, for he had acquired great riches since he took office, and his love of extravagance, told heavily against him. He had in a moment of superiority even shown himself the enemy

of the encroachments of the House of Commons. In short, nobody loved him, and since it was deemed necessary to propitiate the gods, or the mob, the sacrifice of Clarendon was prepared. In exile he wrote his famous account of the Successful Rebellion of the rich against the King, an account that has misled men from that time to this. It has misled in this important matter, that his story has passed for a fair estimate of the events on account of his association with the King. But Clarendon was a grossly disappointed man, incapable of taking a just view when he wrote, and Charles never did write his own version of the same story. Charles's story would have been very different, not indeed the true story, but the other half of Clarendon's. The fact, after all, should not be lost sight of, that Clarendon was of the landed gentry, and in spirit he was generally with his class.

One further reason for Clarendon's fall must be mentioned in a somewhat different fashion, for it introduces a matter of far greater importance. One cause of that fall was that Clarendon was the father-in-law of James, Duke of York. For the opinion of those who mattered was changing with bewildering rapidity towards James. The victory off Lowestoft was speedily forgotten and the disgrace of the Dutch raid was even laid to his charge, though, indeed, James had specifically warned the nation that if the capital ships were laid up, just such a raid must be expected. The striking change of feeling towards James sprang from two main causes: from the character of the man, and from his sympathies with, and impending conversion to, Catholicism.

We will consider the second point first.

There is no need to remark that Catholics were unpopular in England, but it is perhaps worth remarking that they were still a strong body in the country. Perhaps as much as a seventh of the population was attached to the old form of worship. Now, the tone of the nation was pronouncedly anti-catholic, but after the rigours and restrictions of the Puritan

sway, some slight reaction set in, in favour of less persecution, and the papists, though looked upon as a superstitious mob, were not actively hated by their fellows. There was no change of fashion, no swing of the pendulum towards Catholicism after the Restoration, such as we have noted in a previous reign, but the passion for persecution had for the while spent itself and lay dormant.

Such was the general aspect of the situation. The organized wealth of the country, however, the people who were in process of replacing the monarchy in the government of the realm, the coming Aristocracy, were quite definitely and persistently anti-Catholic. With a tenacity of purpose that endured from one generation to the next, these great landlords and their instrument, the House of Commons, were firmly and permanently set against making any terms with the old religion. With them it was an enemy and always an enemy. And how should it be otherwise, since their whole origin and strength lay in the Reformation? The organization of England, you may say, was set rigidly and finally against Catholics. The Church (obviously), the Law, the Universities, the Local Councils, even what remained of the ancient Guilds, all were by now steeped in an anti-Catholic tradition, and thought and acted, consciously and unconsciously, against the older, or Catholic, tradition.

Two outside influences at the same time were acting to confirm this anti-Catholic attitude of the governing classes—for such they had now become. The one was the growing power of France, not only a Catholic nation but, moreover, a nation with a centre of strong, popular monarchy. France was rapidly becoming the real national foe, for Holland, in spite of the Medway incident, was already running a second best in the competition for England's hate, and it was soon to drop out of the contest and become one of England's friends; in time, not indeed unwilling, for a consideration to provide a sovereign in place of the Stuart King. But the example nearest to hand

and, therefore, nearest to hate, of France, Catholic and Monarchial, a contradiction to the whole philosophic position of the rising Aristocrats, aroused every instinct of self-preservation among the English gentry. France triumphant abroad would have been their own destruction. They saw the thing clearly and they knew that a Catholic body in England, united in the Catholic tradition of Europe, was a clear menace to themselves.

There was also and much nearer to hand the other Catholic country of Ireland. Ireland was still a fairly prosperous nation, rich in shipping and commerce. Its real decline had not yet begun. It was not a danger in itself while it was left alone, though the people were so tenacious in their Catholicity. But to any Catholic body in England, or even to France, Ireland was a potential ally and a source of supply, but above all a base for hostile operations, that might conceivably amount to a very real danger.

It was the strength, then, and the possible alliances of the Catholics, the fact that their tradition united them with the larger part of the continent and especially those parts, such as France and Spain, both old and new enemies of England, that called forth fresh outbursts against them. They were a powerful and compact group, numerically about a seventh of the population, but feared by their opponents to be even stronger. The anti-Catholic Commons considered them a very vital problem, and while they existed, always in danger of undergoing a resurrection. Any measure likely to lead to the toleration of them, or even to admit of their right to exist in the state, was quickly and firmly defeated. Any idea of considering them as a natural part of England was rejected as incredible.

When, therefore, it was rumoured that James, Duke of York, was veering round in their direction, the whole face of the government began to turn away from him. To the big owners, he was going over to their enemies. By 1670, it was observed that he had

ceased to communicate at the Established Church. Some time afterwards he was received into the Catholic Church. The exact date is not known, or shall we say, has not yet been discovered. At any rate it was between 1670 and 1672.

Now, to the big landowners and the large fortunes the Monarchy itself was the chief enemy. A king existed to control the powerful and to assist the oppressed. In the struggle between the Monarch and the Aristocracy, each was to the other the vital foe. To the Aristocracy,[1] even a Protestant king was a live enemy. Though he might be at one with them on matters religious, on other points the two different forms of governmental control were sharply opposed. But for a papist to be King, it meant that the one common ground between the two was removed. It meant, or there was the danger of it meaning, the digging up of all the old bothers and battles that had been settled a century ago. It meant opening again the ancient Roman question, the point of supremacy in the Church, even, ultimately, the question of the disposal of the old Church lands. In short, it meant reintroducing a number of dubious and dangerous points, that none of the mandates desired to see introduced. They thought the whole thing was dead and, apparently, it was still living.

Had James been a weak man, a man whom the Commons might expect to lead, the religious difficulty might have been smoothed over. A number of restrictions might have been invented and they would have settled James. But it was well known that James was no weakling. Not only was he a man of courage and both military and naval experience, but he was one whom they had heard in the council chamber, and they liked neither his opinions nor his independence. They had heard him on the subject of the laying up of the capital ships, for instance. He was a man whose judgment was generally sound on anything but persons. He could not weigh up men.

[1] It was not yet that, but within a lifetime it was to become so.

The Commons and their masters knew him. They had seen enough to know his character. They realized that he was not pliable. He did not bend. He was a sound administrator and likely enough to take control into his own hands, when he had the opportunity. In a word, if he became King, he was just the sort of character to try to replace the large landowners in the government of the country; to endeavour to reverse the process which was going on and upon which they relied.

To all his other failings, from their point of view, was added the last straw. He had turned papist. From this point, the campaign against James may definitely be said to have commenced. From now onwards his opponents began to intrigue to alter the succession.

The reason for the change of attitude towards James may be summed up in a sentence: he had become a menace to the establishment of an aristocratic control of England.

Concerning the conversion of James to Catholicism, two things may be noted in this place. Firstly, his conversion resulted from a process intellectual rather than devotional. A very strict Protestant, looking upon his father as a Protestant hero, he was led round to Catholic belief largely by a book on the Reformation, and not only on the Reformation, but in favour of it and opposed to the Catholic claims. It was Heylin's book, and it certainly performed for James a service that its author never expected of it. Secondly, when James took the plunge and abandoned the established religion of the country, he was careful to ask of his spiritual adviser (a Jesuit) whether it was permitted to a man to be a Catholic in secret, following the Catholic faith in private, but outwardly and to the world letting it not be seen that a religious change had taken place within him. Was it possible for a man, he asked, publicly to follow the forms of the faith that he had given up, while in secret and sincerity he practises the Catholic rites? He was

answered that it was not so permitted. A Catholic must not be a Catholic only in the shadows, but must show his faith in the light of day. Again he asked the same question, sending directly to the Pope, to learn whether, as a matter of policy, he might not practise in secret, but again the answer was emphatically in the negative. . . .

In 1670 was signed the secret Treaty of Dover. By his cunning promotion of the triple alliance, Charles forced the French King (Louis XIV) to the point of offering a subsidy in return for neutrality. This subsidy enabled the King to put his fleet back on the waters—for which purpose the Parliament still refused money, in spite of the Dutch raid. The Treaty placed England, for a while, on the French side of the European division of groups, but against Holland, as also against Spain. This new move was excellent from the point of view of Colonial expansion, for by it the country was enabled to annex land in Spanish America. For a period, too, it armed the King against the big landlords, rendering him independent of the supplies eked out by Parliament.

The Duke was kept out of all the business connected with the Secret Treaty, but he was, nevertheless, gloriously connected with one of its results. The Navy —his Navy—once more took the high seas, and in 1671 he commanded finely in the last great battle against the Dutch, which concluded the sea fighting of that reign. It was only for the purpose of wiping out the audacious Dutch raid that he was given leave to lead the sailors once more in battle. He was allowed to return to the active command for just that one fight. But, in any case, it was decisive enough to leave no successors. After that the Navy rode triumphant on the narrow seas.

Following the Treaty, moreover, for two years was it unnecessary to call Parliament, but in the spring of 1673 the Houses were summoned to assemble. It was an anti-James Parliament that now met. The Duke had been hunted out of the Council Chamber

and after that, and in spite of his sea exploit, away from the Admiralty in which he had performed such splendid national service. But all this was not enough. This latest Parliament was concerned to bar him from the succession.

It was at the Parliament of '73 that the war against James was brought out into the open and the real object made clear. The leader of the Parliamentary group in this matter was Shaftesbury. A man of immense wealth and influence, Shaftesbury (or Anthony Ashley Cooper, as he was originally named) had invariably flourished under various forms of government and in divers camps. Cooper indeed is a mystery. Neither Cromwell nor Charles was able successfully to deal with him. Cromwell's impotence, in the case of Cooper, is indeed remarkable. There is no known reason why Cromwell should have been unequal to the task of coping with Cooper ; but there it is. Cooper betrayed Cromwell, after the two had been working together in the same cause, and the latter made no attempt to punish his betrayer. And that was in the days of Cromwell's greatest power. That some dark secret might explain the mystery is probable, but the secret is still secret and likely to remain so. We have only before us the unexplained fact. Cooper was one of those who, later, backed Monk in the bringing about of the Restoration. He was amply rewarded. He was made a peer in 1661, Baron Ashley. In a few more years he was appointed Earl of Shaftesbury, and now, as Lord Chancellor, he appeared against Charles, leading the attack of the superior classes against James Stuart, present Duke of York, but presumably England's next King.

During the two years that Parliament was prorogued, Charles had used his influence to remove some of the grosser disabilities from the shoulders of his Catholic subjects and the Dissenters, allowing them to accept any employment, and yet to practise their religion in private. Charles favoured a " Declaration of Indulgence " that should include all English-

men. He wished for toleration of opinions in the realm, for it was his belief that a true policy of toleration would ultimately lead to national unity. The Declaration was put before Parliament and immediately thrown out. The Parliamentarians, indeed, countered it heavily with the Test Act. Toleration was thus nipped in the bud, the Declaration declared intolerable, and, in its stead, was pushed through both Houses the law of the Test Act, that remained law in England right up to modern times. By no one in Parliament was it opposed—not even by the Catholic peers who sat in the Lords of right.

There were three special points in this new Test law, and the third was the determining one. The points were: (1) No man might hold office, civil or military, who had not taken the Oath of Supremacy, allowing that the King was head of the Church; or (2) who did not receive the Sacrament in accordance with the practice of the Established Church; or (3) who did not make a declaration against Transubstantiation.

It was the third point that mattered, and, indeed, for which the measure was framed. The Oath of Supremacy might be got over. After all one could persuade one's self that it meant but two things, that no foreign power had civil jurisdiction over England and that the King was the head of his Church. If you did not belong to his Church, you might admit the fact of his leadership of his own Church with enthusiasm. So argued many Dissenters and many Catholics. It was the same with the Sacrament. The Dissenter might permit himself to go through the form of the act according to the rules and yet remain a Dissenter. But the matter of Transubstantiation was a different thing altogether; for while the Dissenter could repudiate it with all his heart, the Catholic found himself at this point stopped, as by an insuperable barrier. Here the Dissenter and the Catholics (until now comrades in distress) were abruptly divided. To the Catholic Transub-

stantiation was cardinal. He was forced back on his heels, so to speak, and there was no way in which he could circumvent the Test Act. If he got through it at all, he got through by ceasing to be a Catholic.

The Test Act caught up the Catholics, as in a net, and exposed them to their fellow countrymen. But the big fish that was caught in the net, the fish for which it was cast, was the Duke of York. The Duke was, as it were, caught out, his papistry held up to public gaze; he, the heir to the throne, thus discovered in the midst of Protestant England. The Test Act gave just that publicity to James's conversion that the Parliamentary group desired. It was fine diplomacy, but sad morality.

The King strongly urged his brother to conform outwardly, to make a show of Protestantism, to do so little a thing that should in itself mean nothing. Let him, at least, put in an occasional appearance at the Royal Chapel, even if it were only to assist his brother and his King in passing through a crisis. Such was Charles's suggestion to meet this formidable attack. But James could not do it. He did not know, as we have hinted, how to compromise. Moreover, he had already been at pains to inform himself what was the Catholic view on this special point of outward observance and secret Catholicity. He took the only other course open to him; he resigned. Not willing to take the Test Act, he was no longer eligible to serve either in a civil or a military capacity. Such was now the law of the land. The Admiralty had been his great work, the Navy was his creation. The one he had organized, the other he had commanded on the high seas. At the age of forty, he was called upon to abandon them suddenly, and he did so. All else that he must now resign was small compared with this, yet highly prejudicial for the future. But he had formed his resolution and he kept to it; nor did he dream of making terms with his opponents.

To that generation and perhaps to this, the action of James in thus turning away from the work that

he knew was proper to him and, still more, in blighting his prospects during such dubious times, was the action of a fool. To allow a conscientious scruple to stand between one's self and a throne was considered mere childishness. That there might be nobility in the gesture made small impression, for the age that saw the rise of the Aristocracy (as the unfortunate Duke was very shortly to discover) was not an age that understood nobility. It was not an honourable age. Nevertheless, it understood to perfection the art of calculation, and the framers of the Test Act, Shaftesbury and his adherents, knew precisely how James would act in the circumstances that they had created. The Act was worded to debar James from following the career of an heir to the throne and thus, it was believed, from succeeding his brother. The first purpose it achieved, but the second was prevented by unforeseen events, and in the end it was necessary to frame a very different Act, or create a very special instrument, to remove James from the throne. But the same minds that planned the Test Act planned the coup of 1688. It was a consistent policy at work, from first to last.

Parliament had won its first battle easily, perhaps too easily. The blow had gone home and James and his fellow Catholics now stood in the eyes of their countrymen as persons whom it was not safe to employ upon national duties. They were held up as untrustworthy, persons of doubtful loyalty. To say the least it looked odd to their fellows that they should thus suddenly be deprived of all office, and it should be borne in mind that their condition made it impossible for them to put forward their defence. They had done nothing that could be defended, but it is important to remember in view of the event that immediately followed (the Popish plot) that it was only the voice of their accusers that was heard. The victims were silent. When, however, Parliament endeavoured to supplement their first blow with a second, the second failed. James's wife, Anne, was dead (1671),

and an agitation was organized against his proposed new marriage with Mary of Modena on the ground that she was a Catholic. The question was made a Parliamentary issue, but the King ordered Shaftesbury to prorogue Parliament before the matter could be put to the vote. The Earl, feeling that he and his followers were sufficiently strong to defy Charles in this particular, did nothing of the kind. They knew that Charles knew when the time came to submit to his advisers, and thought that this was just such a time. They were to find out their mistake. However failing Charles might deem the Royal authority, he knew that it had not yet fallen so low as this. Shaftesbury had overstepped the mark. He was suddenly dismissed his post—and the war between James and the Parliament broadened its scope, James receiving an ally : his brother Charles, the King.

James was married to Mary of Modena, as was intended. Between the King and the group of big opponents there was quiet, the unhealthy quiet of deep plotting. For four years there seemed peace, if it may be called a peace when in the background vast preparations are being made for war. The Duke of York retired abroad, leaving the embarrassed King freer to continue his perilous policy of steering between shoals domestic and foreign, and yet retaining the appearance of a King. The Test Act having gone against him, he used the interval of tranquillity to strengthen himself in other directions. Having veered too close to Louis and France, he now began to lean again towards Holland. Any dependence upon France would be fatal to Charles's policy. Therefore, he turned towards Louis' enemy, Holland, and a marriage was arranged between Mary, the Duke of York's elder daughter, and William of Orange. It was a fatal union, from the Stuart standpoint, but for the moment it was policy. It was as short-sighted as any other foreign policy—but then foreign policy was always short-sighted, since it consisted in quick action to take advantage of passing circumstances.

At any rate, this marriage resulted in the extinction of the Stuart line in England, and the end of the attempts to restore the popular monarchy.

James's children, Mary and Anne, both of his first wife, had been brought up in the Protestant faith, in spite of their father's protests. It was Charles's method of balancing his brother's Catholicity, and upon that point James had found himself powerless to interfere. It was a Protestant Mary who now married a Protestant Prince of Orange in 1677, a step that changed the whole scheme of relations between England and France, and England and Holland, and ended by placing the small, wizened foreigner, whose reputation was none of the soundest, on the throne of England. Mary was fifteen years at the time, a dull girl, who was never to have children.

There followed upon this marriage settlement a long peace in Europe, the sign of which was the Treaty of Nimeguen, that left Holland compact and safe, France in possession of lands taken from decayed Spain, and England free from the expense of war and able to develop her foreign commerce, which carried with it a steady rise in the amount of Customs revenue. With trade increasing and rates remaining the same, Charles began to receive from the Customs dues almost sufficient income to maintain the Crown. He was edging away from Parliament and the lords behind it, and the necessity he had been under to beg for grants. He was not yet free, but he experienced already a measure of freedom. Such was the initial advantage that the Peace Treaty, following the marriage of James's daughter, gave to the King. In so far was the marriage of William and Mary justified in the eyes of the match-maker.

The possibility of Charles purchasing his freedom with the Customs dues was, of course, abhorrent to the big lords and landowners. It was a vital part of their position that the King should be dependent upon them for supplies. It was the power they possessed and with which they could dictate to the King. It

was their real weapon. And if they failed against the pliant Charles, how could they hope to succeed against the rigid James ? While there was yet time they must work through the still (but less) dependent Charles to prevent the succession of James. The first step they took was to find a rival to James ; the second, the Popish plot.

For a rival to James his opponents turned their eyes towards Monmouth, Lucy Walter's son. Monmouth was a man whom Charles freely forgave—and he had much to forgive—probably on his mother's account. A great effort was made to prove that Charles and Lucy had actually been married in the early days of the exile. A mysterious black box, containing the documents, was darkly spoken of, but Charles flatly contradicted the tale and not the shadow of proof was ever produced in support of the statement. Another and more formidable rival was discovered in the person of William of Orange, a Protestant and, by reason of marriage, quite close to the throne, and, moreover, the continental rival of Catholic France. Charles's foreign policy had already overstepped his mark.

But while rivals might wait for the nonce, it was urgently necessary to inflame popular feeling against Catholics again, in order to render James's faith so obnoxious to the English people that they would welcome another in his place when Charles should be dead. To discredit James further, and leave the way open for his rival (whoever he should be) was the full purpose of the Popish Plot. With this view, stories of the most amazing sort were industriously circulated against Catholics throughout the country, but more especially throughout London. Catholics had each been ordered to murder half a dozen of their neighbours, to burn all the shipping in the Pool of London, to fire the city (yet again !), to stab the King, now by an abrupt change represented as the hero of the Protestant cause. These and many such stories of the wildest and most unreasoned sort, were flying

back and forth, growing more preposterous with each repetition. A wave of insanity seemed to sweep over the country, and with special severity to attack the metropolis. It seemed an insane spasm, comparable with any other sudden flaming up of the populace. It had no reasoned basis, but suddenly bursting into flame, raged like a pestilence till it had spent its force, and then died and vanished as quickly as it had appeared, leaving the country not a little bewildered by its recent activity. Of such a type, for example, was the madness of the Gordon Riots of a hundred years later.

The Popish Plot had no real author, for the malicious stories were invented and circulated by a variety of interested persons, and even so, were entirely without power to produce so fierce and extensive a frenzy. The stories, as a cause, simply do not explain the effect. But if there was no author, there was a hero, the individual known to history as Titus Oates ; a fitting hero for such a plot.

Oates, or Ambrose, his earlier name, was an ex-anabaptist minister, who had also been an orthodox clergyman. Indeed in his adventurous career he had sampled all religions, without finding one to his taste. Pretending to be a Catholic convert, he had caused himself to be placed at the English Jesuit college at Valladolid. From this establishment he was expelled for misconduct, as also from the French College of St. Omer. Flushed with his continental honours, Oates returned to England at the time that the Jesuits were holding their usual triennial congregation in London. This meeting of the Order, Oates denounced as a consultation to find out the best method of killing the King, of firing the capital and similar atrocities. Any invention of his, Oates pretended to be based on information drawn from his personal knowledge gained at St. Omer and in Spain.

Oates was a large man with a great face and bow legs, of extreme courage and of monstrous imagination. From the commencement of the Popish night-

mare, he dominated the situation. Before the Council he easily persuaded those who needed no special persuading, but who were, in fact, helping the Plot with all their efforts in their determination to rid themselves finally of the Duke, of the reality of his disclosures. His narrative, devoid of probability, did not, however, succeed in persuading the King, who caught Oates out in a palpable falsehood, but the Council was not going to have the whole prospect ruined merely on account of the untruthfulness of the chief witness. The lords held themselves convinced of the truth of the startling revelations, and there then began that long series of pretended trials and judicial murders of the unfortunate Catholics whose names were mentioned by Oates in connection with his alleged discoveries. At these trials was to be heard Lord Justice Scroggs raving and denouncing the victims of the Plot, shouting that he was satisfied of their guilt before any proof had even appeared.

The King bowed before the storm for his present safety, but to his future risk. It is the great black mark against Charles. He knew the whole conspiracy to be a colossal fiction and falsehood and yet, to retain his throne and, if possible, to pass the crown on to his brother—now in the utmost depths of unpopularity—he did not assert himself to arrest the madness. He put his signature to warrants for the deaths of men whom he knew to be innocent. He kept pace with the frenzy, so to speak, knowing that it would expend itself and die down in time, when reason would once more appear on the surface. His brother, the real person for which the Plot was engineered, he ordered out of the country and thus out of the danger zone. James obeyed. He retired to Brussels. The chief source of irritation and the chief person in peril thus removed, the King breathed more freely and allowed the frenzy of the moment to dissipate itself on the lesser personages.

Parliament was dissolved and a large emergency

council organized to tide over the period of unrest. The plan was Temple's, but the King's aim was to have his chief enemies under his own eyes. He thought they would be less dangerous in council than left to their own devices. In this council of thirty he received his opponents with open arms, hoping by his diplomatic skill to keep them from doing their worst until the Popish agitation should be over. In some measure the King's policy was successful, for he was able to prevent the loyal judges from being dismissed when outcry was raised against them, but a further move to destroy the right of succession he was powerless to prevent.

It has generally been assumed by historians that at the time of the Popish Plot the country stood in no special peril from the Catholics; that the revelations were fictions and the discovery of the "Plot" wholly a piece of hypocrisy. Quite recently, however, an effort has been made to show that the alleged plot was not without basis. It is a rational attempt to explain what must otherwise be considered mere irrational frenzy. It is highly probable that the earlier historians were correct in their estimate. There was no "Plot." Why should Catholics wish to kill a King who was himself half a Catholic? How could they fire the city without firing their own property in the city? It is possible that the truth was that, though there was no "Plot" to work mischief in the country, there was, nevertheless, a tendency, not towards conspiracy, but rather towards converts. The only peril was that the Catholic faith might spread. It was the alarming suggestion that, with the prospect of a Catholic King in the near future, the Catholic religion would once more spring into active life in the Kingdom that called forth the contrary suggestion that it must at all costs and immediately be crushed. The proceedings that followed the discovery of the "Plot" did not, in point of fact, succeed in crushing the religion, but in the next generation, and after so many previous attempts, Catholicism was at last

stamped out in England. The Catholic faith really did disappear with the appearance of William, the Dutch Prince.

When the new Parliament met after the Popish agitation had somewhat spent itself, the men whom Charles had been trying to manage in Council, but especially Shaftesbury and Sunderland,[1] introduced their Bill to debar James from the succession. It was named the "Bill of Exclusion" and provided that James should be incapable of inheriting the crowns of England and Ireland. Charles, who knew when to give way before his powerful subjects and who had but recently endangered his soul by condemning to death those whom an unreasoning mob now desired to see condemned, never gave way on a point of dynastic right. When the thing was put before him, he attempted concessions, but finally, when they availed nothing, he definitely struck. He went, in the first place, so far as to suggest that his brother's rights should be maintained under conditions that would have made those rights unworthy of acceptance; that he should be given the title of King but live abroad, and so on. But his lords would hear of no compromise. Even the proposal that James should enjoy the kingship in name only they declined to consider. The rising Aristocracy intended that this should be their final and complete victory over the monarchial principle, and nothing but the utter exclusion of James (that would give to them alone the right to name his successor) would satisfy them. It was a debate of tremendous importance and every expedient was made use of, both by Charles and by his opponents. The fact of James's religion carried great weight with the excitement of the Popish Plot still dying away in the distance. It was at this time that Monmouth's name was brought forward for the succession, and after that, the name of William of Orange.

[1] Robert Spencer, a man of many twistings and turnings, and one who was to help James II handsomely towards his downfall.

The Duke of Monmouth picked this moment to appear on the scene, as a Stuart and an especial champion of the Protestant cause. He made a sort of semi-royal progress round the country, courting popularity in a blatant, in a far too blatant, manner. His followers, or rather leaders, for it was they who made Monmouth possible, made yet another attempt to establish his legitimacy, but it was not to be established, either by proclamation, or by publicity. It was the introduction of Monmouth at this stage that gave the turn to the great debate and settled the issue. Charles prorogued and then dissolved his Parliament. The Exclusion Bill was thus not passed. Yet the monarchy was, in fact, nearly dead in England, and within ten years of that date it was finally killed. The ceaseless activities of the great lords working, consistently and in accord, for now nearly a century, were really within view of their reward. The Aristocracy was nearly born.

As for James, he had been consigned to Scotland for some years, where he ruled almost in royal state. The old Palace of Holyrood, the palace of his fathers, that had seen so many strange happenings since the Stuarts (or rather Stewarts) had come to the Scottish throne, was prepared for his reception. Almost in ruin, as indeed was the Stuart cause, it was hastily got ready for him, and there James and Mary of Modena held their court, while they devoted themselves to the interests of Scotland. It is interesting to note that outside the atmosphere of intrigue and conspiracy in which he was so frequently caught, James was conspicuously successful in his exhibition of statecraft, and gained more faithful subjects in Scotland than was pleasant for his opponents in England to discover. Had the same atmosphere obtained in England, it is almost certain that he would have gained equal fame, and that James II, the founder of the Navy, the country's special pride and boast, would have been reckoned one of the most popular of our kings. But the countries differed in all respects,

and in England, and steadily making their way forward were already Sunderland, Churchill, and the rest, upon whom James in his hour of need was to rely and to find each in turn wanting.

The new Aristocracy had almost won through. The future rulers had not, however, come into their own yet. One reason that they failed on this occasion was that they were not agreed as to who should supplant James, Monmouth or William of Orange. Halifax, speaking with great eloquence in the Lords, managed to do more harm than he intended. Himself favouring the cause of the Dutchman, he opposed the Duke of Monmouth with such reason and vigour that the Bill against James was actually thrown out. Halifax must indeed have been bewildered by the effect of his own oratory. But the Bill of Exclusion was not yet dead. At the next Parliament, the Parliament of 1681, and the last Parliament of that reign, the business would have begun all over again. The gathering was summoned to meet at Oxford, for in London the mob could be organized by Shaftesbury's men and their friends. At Oxford they met in noisy rebellion and in arms, their object being to overawe the King. With a last royal gesture, Charles dissolved the assembly. Nor did he trouble Parliament, or allow it to trouble him, for the remainder of his life.

Charles's great aim was at length achieved. He could afford to dispense with his Parliament; he could cut his brother clear of that peril that pursued him each time the Houses assembled. The victory for which he had striven for the space of twenty years was now within his grasp. Four years before his death he was able to look upon himself as King of England. His various schemes and contrivances did actually give him just that independence that freed him from the control of the gentry. Commercial development that he had carefully fostered, and not without ulterior motive, provided a revenue through the Customs which, with subsidy from an ally, were sufficient to maintain him for the remaining four

years of his life. All his years on the throne had been years of battle with the magnates. Both sides had fought with skill and tenacity. Charles kept his opponents at bay by tactful concessions and submissions, the while he played off one big man against another. But he had to make use of them. He was powerless to get rid of them. There they remained, however the battle went. They, for their part, had pressed him sorely, but they had miscalculated badly on the possibilities of the revenue from Customs. This revenue, given because of its smallness, rose in a manner for which they were wholly unprepared. It turned to the King's advantage and he was quick to appreciate its meaning. It meant the liberty of a King. Then came the great opportunity of the lords of renewing the attack, the opportunity offered by James's conversion to the Catholic faith. They pressed the attack home, thinking to crush kingship at a blow. But Charles had been given time to steady himself. He accepted the challenge, fought and won the day. The magnates retired, losers of the battle, but still with the campaign in their hands. There came a brief interval during which Charles might enjoy his short kingship almost in peace. Then Charles II died.

Monmouth at this unhappy juncture in his affairs, went over the seas to wait until the time for further mischief presented itself. It was not long in coming. Shaftesbury likewise retired, but he was not to return. He died abroad, before the defeat of his class had been turned to victory. But the result of Charles's work, the kingship coming into his grasp, too late to be of use to him, and too late to save the monarchy in England, as he fully understood, must have caused amusement to that cynical King.

But, whatever the conditions, Charles now ruled absolutely and, what is more, with the country behind him. That devotion to the popular monarchy that had been traditionally English and which discovered itself in so many strange quarters during the mis-

fortunes of the Stuarts, now asserted itself with vigour. Given a free choice, it is highly probable that Englishmen generally would have preferred the institution of kingship to the establishment of an aristocratic form of government. Be that as it may, the return of the King for one brief spell before the ideal was extinguished in England was not unpopular with the people.

In May, 1682, James of York returned from Scotland and took up his quarters at St. James's Palace. His return was not greeted with that hostility that his opponents had expected. He became the King's right-hand man and, as the energy of his brother declined, it was James who became more and more the real ruler of England. Charles was content to leave matters in his brother's hands because he knew the loyalty and the practical value of James, not to mention his thoroughness in detail. But the King was also assured that James would see things through better than he would be likely to do himself. Quite a number of the Duke's enemies, too, began to turn towards him. They saw in James the future King and wished to provoke no further resentment against themselves. They wished to be on the right side. Amongst those who thus consulted their own interests was Sunderland and, of course, Churchill. Monmouth, too, would have come to make his peace, but his friends, and especially Shaftesbury and Russell, held him back. They had further work for him to do. They still wished him to rival James, and they could see farther ahead than either James or Monmouth, but not, I think, Charles.

One last attempt was made by the extremists of the beaten party to deprive the King and the Duke of their power. It was an attempt made by the thoughtless members and those who knew not how to wait. A plot was formed after frequent consultations, for an insurrection in the City of London and for the seizing and assassination of the royal brothers, either at Whitehall, or on the road from Newmarket to

London. Charles frequently visited Newmarket, and near Hoddleston stood a house belonging to one of the conspirators. It was known as Rye House, and from this house the plot took its name, the Rye House Plot. The leaders of the plot were in touch with Monmouth, Essex, Grey, Russell and Hampden. Information, however, reached the King in time of the intended assassination and the leaders of the plot were arrested. Some were executed, but Monmouth was pardoned once more. On his knees he acknowledged his guilt and, turning to James, he asked forgiveness, promising that if James should survive the King he would be the first man to draw the sword in defence of his rights, whenever occasion might require. Doubtless James did not forget this scene two years later, after the affair of Sedgemoor. But, at any rate, the plot failed, the conspirators were punished and a new wave of popularity engulfed Charles, and also, in a slightly lesser degree, the Duke of York.

For the moment all seemed well. The opponents of the Crown had drawn off and it was all too readily forgotten that they still existed in their power, only waiting for the time they should all strike again together. The King looked more like a King than he had ever done before. The bad habits picked up in exile were not nearly so prominent as they had been. The Arts and the Drama flourished under his Royal patronage, and Science, too, came into its own. A ring of famous men surrounded Charles and he talked to them in preference to the courtiers. His brother James did the hard work, and did it faithfully and well. The Duke was still obedient to his King, however, and did no more than protest when his daughter, Anne, was married off to the fat Protestant Prince, George of Denmark. The Admiralty was once more organized efficiently and even finance was stable. All looked well and yet it was but a last glow of the sun of monarchy, a burst of splendour before the end.

It was on Monday, the 2nd of February, 1684, that Charles was seized with a stroke. He recovered the

use of speech, but it was evident that he was rapidly sinking. In three days it was certain that he was dying. He lay at Whitehall, and outside all was dark and very cold. The great State bedroom was crowded. Bishops and doctors, peers and servants, all manner of persons were gathered round the dying King. There was a constant but subdued bustle, as people passed in and out. At the head of the King's bed was a little door, opening on a small back stairway. The Duke was in the room, watching and waiting, a calm figure who commanded where else had been confusion. The bishops had read the office for the sick, and had urged the King to communicate. He remained silent, though it was clear that he both heard and understood. When the Churchmen grew more importunate, he merely said in a tone that lacked interest that there was time enough, and again, since they still pressed him, that he would think of it. The darkness without deepened to night, but the King had yet one task to perform before he died.

The Duke by his bedside had been busy all day, for at this perilous juncture much devolved on him. Orders must be given in the King's name, but meantime the French Ambassador wondered why James delayed so long in setting Charles's conscience at rest. Both he and the Duke knew whom it was that the King wanted, but James had already made the necessary arrangements. At length he knelt down by his brother's bedside, having requested the company to draw off a little to the end of the room, and asked in a low tone if he might send for a priest. It was in a tone of relief and gratitude that Charles replied: "For God's sake do." But, after a moment's thought, he added: "Will it not expose you to danger?" James and danger had been too long acquainted for him to consider the matter now.

At the Palace was an English Benedictine, Father Huddlestone. He it was who had once helped to save Charles's life during the days of danger that followed the battle of Worcester. On this account

had he been saved by royal intervention from the fury of the late Popish riot. James had already requested the monk to hold himself ready for a call to the royal bedside, and another had been sent to the Portuguese Embassy for the Sacrament.

On receiving the King's reply, James called loudly to the crowd to leave the bed-chamber, all, that is, save three, who were requested to remain. And when they had withdrawn, by the back staircase and through the door at the head of the bed was hurried in the Benedictine. James introduced him in these words: "Sir, this good man once saved your body. To-day he comes to save your soul." And Charles made reply: "He is welcome."

To the Benedictine Charles declared that it was his desire to die in the communion of the Roman Church, that he deeply repented of all his sins, but especially that of having deferred his reconciliation to this hour. Huddlestone then received his confession, pronounced the absolution, and administered the Sacrament. Before the Sacrament, Charles made a feeble effort to kneel, but they stopped him. As he sank back exhausted, he was advised to depend upon the sufferings of Christ, and make them his consolation, and soon after the little door in the wall reopened and the priest was gone. The company was recalled and the people flowed back into the room, and all seemed unchanged. But to Charles the short interval had made all the difference.

They watched all through that night as the King sank slowly towards death. At times his sufferings grew intense, but between the spasms of pain his mind was clear, and he viewed his approaching end calmly, and with resignation. He remembered everybody during his last hours, and sent his blessing and asked pardon of each. His Queen and his children (they were not, of course, her children) were recommended to James, as also were his women folk, for he wished none to suffer whom he had known as friends. His brother James he kissed on the hand,

calling him the best of brothers and friends, and wishing him a long and prosperous reign.

Thus the long last night passed, and before morning lethargy eased him. The return of the pain at his side brought him back to his senses once more, and he complained of the difficulty of drawing his breath. When dawn at length broke he was visibly failing, but he was able to ask them to draw the curtains that he might look one last look on the white light of morning. Somewhat later his speech failed him, and, later still, he passed into a state of unconsciousness. By noon he had slipped quietly out of this life.

. . . . . .

So Charles escaped from the scene of his battles in the day of his triumph. He was fortunate thus to obtain his release, while the swing of the pendulum was still in his favour. Not many of the Stuarts were so lucky as to die in their beds, with the Crown still in their keeping. Such had indeed been his grandfather's felicity, but not his great-grandmother's; not his father's, nor was it to be his brother's. The Stuarts, it is suggested, were doomed before they crossed the border; doomed by their English ancestors. Their enemies were too powerful before even they came up to oppose them. The tall, well-proportioned Charles, with his dark, foreign features and his comedy style of speech, with his hundred and one interests and his keen political grasp on reality, was no more. He had outdistanced his competitors, the big lords, in the race for power, rather than for the crown and glory. He outdistanced them and then retired with his cynical laugh; but the race was not over.

The competitors were still in the field, and it is something of a paradox that would have appealed to the cynical side of Charles, that he was able thus to slip off, the apparent victor, while the real victors were thundering along in the rear. The situation is indeed paradoxical, for Charles set out, in the first place, to maintain the shreds of royalty that remained after the death of his father. His object was to hold

firmly to the tottering throne, and to keep the torn robes of state about him ; to look like a king, even if he did not feel like one. And he, who had thus set out to preserve the trappings of kingship, found himself, before the end, a real king. During the last four years he was more kingly even than his father had been ; more so than his grandfather, the fussy but ineffectual James, had ever dared to be. And yet he knew—none better—that this last hold on the throne was a precarious affair, an arrangement that could not last. He knew that permanent monarchy had not returned to England with his own seizing of the strings of control. He knew that there was a next move to come from his opponents, the issue of which would probably be fatal. He left the issue to his brother and he must have regretted it, for he was a good brother, and he knew the limitations of James. He knew the strength of his antagonists, the rising Aristocracy, and it was a great part of their strength that they were out for power and not for a Crown. They could thus move together as allies, and not separately as rivals.

Still, in so far as it was possible, Charles had made sure of his throne. He had done so against a line of opposition that might well have been considered unbreakable. Indeed, it was not broken, but bent. He had triumphed without arms. It was a bloodless victory. What he had done was to achieve that perilous victory that is hung between two definite and decisive defeats : the impossible victory. And, flushed with his success, the victor quickly passed from the scene of his triumph. For a small space the Monarchy was poised high up, with a fall both behind it and before. And Charles, appreciating the position better than most, must have marvelled to himself at his own momentary loftiness.

VI

THE KING PASSES OVER THE WATER

James II

The supreme power that Charles had so lately wrested from his powerful nobles was now in the hands of his brother James. It was in the short reign of James, less than four full years, that the nobles returned to the charge. It was the last charge, for it was wholly successful, and the Aristocracy had established itself in England on the ruins of the monarchy, to rule undisturbed for more than two hundred years.

The few years during which King James was on the throne were but an episode in his long life. He had known so many adventures, as soldier, as sailor, as penniless prince, as Governor of Scotland, and what not, that the brief interval of kingship was but an extra adventure, albeit, to him, the natural result of all that went before. It was the summit to which he climbed and from which he so speedily fell. Yet it is by his conduct while on the throne that he has been judged, or, may I say, misjudged. The judgment was, of course, given by those who replaced him, and is perhaps most completely summarized by Macaulay. It was Macaulay's purpose to praise that change in the form of government that is marked by the exit of James and the entry of the Aristocracy—and William of Orange; and the title chosen to describe the change (though it savours rather of the spirit of modern advertising) was the "Glorious Revolution." It was the Whig triumph, and Macaulay was a Whig. In other words, Macaulay's keen appreciation of the confirmation of the transfer of power from one person to a small group of powerful persons,

is rather in the nature of one giving himself a testimonial for his own good conduct. In Macaulay's history it could hardly be expected that the writer would state accurately the two sides of the great quarrel and, to do Macaulay justice, he would not have suggested that he had attempted to do so. To him there was only one side to the quarrel. The Whigs were obviously in the right, therefore James must be in the wrong. Whenever Macaulay is speaking of James it is important to recollect that he is speaking to a brief against James. It is important to recollect this fact since the judgment of the last century was largely founded by Macaulay, who was merely putting into what he considered its final form the tradition that he inherited. No doubt the magic of the words that he had at his command considerably helped to drive his verdict home. It is only lately that the remains of James are being salved after Macaulay's destructive fire. The remains are being put together and are already beginning to look like the remains of a man, and even (oddly enough) like the remains of a King.

Brief as James's reign was, it divided itself into two parts, the period of his popularity, and the period during which that popularity waned. He started out with two problems, one of which he was to settle, but the other was to settle him. The first was the question of revenue and the second, the question of religious practice. They were questions of a very different magnitude.

King Charles had died in the enjoyment of the Customs dues, and after his death such dues were automatically collected, as they must be if trade was to continue normally under the new King. They had not, however, been legally assigned to James. The old kingly dues, it will be remembered, were abolished at the Restoration and his income, his personal income, substituted. Was James to accept the duties levied before they had been granted to him by Parliament, and on the assumption that they would

be so granted? It was suggested that the money should be held till Parliament met to decide upon the matter, but this suggestion—it was Guildford's—was frankly impossible, since it meant opening the reign with a burden of debt. James had to live somehow and he could only borrow from the bankers at a high rate of interest. The new King settled the matter by summoning a new Parliament to meet in three months' time, and he followed up the summons by proclaiming the continuance of the Customs dues, pending the meeting of the House. When Parliament did meet, it confirmed him in the Customs revenue, granting it for life.

The question of the King's religious practice was a matter of more immediate concern. That he was a Catholic was well known and almost as deeply deplored. People had grown accustomed to his having Mass said privately at St. James's. It was wondered, indeed, why he did not supplement his private worship with public attendance at the State service, thus satisfying his private whim and the ideas of the majority of his subjects at the same time. But at any rate, private worship in the Catholic manner was more or less expected of him.

When James became King he altered his private practice to a public one. He was badly advised so to do, but he was the kind of man who faces a challenge boldly and with a counter-challenge. As soon as he was in a position to order it, he had the Mass publicly at the Palace, and though he agreed that it should be said in the Queen's chapel and that he should attend as a private individual rather than as a monarch, he had himself accompanied to the very doors of the chapel by the great officers of the Court, while his guards lined the way. It was unnecessary for any to proceed beyond the doors if they willed otherwise, but the doors were left wide during the ceremony. It was bad policy. Catholicism was unpopular in the realm, and several saw in this blatant exhibition of it a challenge to the State Church. They were wrong, but so it seemed.

James also showed his sympathies towards a policy of toleration by releasing the thousands of Catholics and Non-conformists who were still in prison on account of their religious convictions. In this he cannot be said to have acted unwisely, since he was obviously doing but justice. Still, it was an act that gave excuse to his enemies and helped to inflame that anti-Catholic feeling in England that, since the Gunpowder Plot, had never been far below the surface. The religious question at this stage required to be treated with the greatest tact and discretion, but with all his greater qualities, these two lesser were among the qualities that James lacked.

The other quality he lacked was judgment of men. In affairs his judgment was sound, but he was unable to judge of men, for he judged all by himself. He thought it natural for men to be as patriotic as he was. Charles had known better. He knew that the men of his generation were just as patriotic as their interests allowed them to be. He acted on that assumption. But James never realized the dishonour of his time, and each fresh disloyalty struck him a new and staggering blow. But his lack of judgment in men led him to leave Laurence Hyde (Rochester) at the head of his government. He had inherited this man from his brother's reign, but he was not able to use him as Charles had done. His great mistake, however, was to keep Sunderland as Secretary to the Council. He should have known better.

James was crowned on St. George's Day at Westminster Abbey. All the rites of the Church of England were followed, saving only the Communion. The Coronation Oath was taken, the King promising to support the Church as by law established. Three weeks later he met his first Parliament, the first indeed that had met in England for a number of years. The financial question was easily settled to the satisfaction of both sides. As his brother had been in the habit of receiving them, James requested that the Customs dues should be assigned him. A special grant was also

claimed to meet the debts that Charles had left. It was given. Yet another sum was required to meet the expenses of putting down the rebellion that Argyle had started in Scotland. It was voted. The new Parliament, in fact, received James with a show of welcome, cheering him continually as he made his various claims. All that he asked was freely granted, and a motion for the persecution of Dissenters (one of those automatic, or perpetual motions, without which no Parliament had been complete for the last three generations) was rejected with a gesture, merely on account of the King's known desire for toleration.

Argyle's rebellion in Scotland was part of a larger scheme of hostility to James. The rising in Scotland was—or, rather, should have been, for the plan miscarried—worked in conjunction with the bigger rebellion of Monmouth in the West. The thing was planned in Holland. Monmouth, relying on his former popularity and trusting that the country would rally round a Protestant in his attempt to overthrow a Catholic King, made up his mind to invade England. So confident was he that the English people would welcome him as a deliverer that he entirely omitted to enquire whether he would find active support when he landed. The Scottish exile, Argyle, he secured as an ally. The scheme was that Argyle should sail for Scotland and Monmouth should sail for the south of England, so that a double invasion should simultaneously occur. The allies were to strike at one and the same time, north and south of Britain. The exiled leader of the Covenanters landed on the west coast of Scotland on the 2nd of May (1685), raised his own retainers and published a proclamation against James. He found little following in his native land. In Scotland, indeed, James was justly popular, his period of governorship not forgotten. There was, moreover, little resentment likely to be felt against James when it was led by one so unpopular in Scotland as Argyle. After a series of misfortunes, the rebel was captured (June 17th) and at the end of the same

month he was executed at Edinburgh. His rebellion had never been a danger to James, and probably added to the new King's popularity.

Monmouth was to have followed his Scotch ally within the space of six days, yet it was the 11th of June before he stole unobserved down the Channel from Amsterdam, and appeared in front of the little port of Lyme Regis, at the boundary of Dorset and Devon. He landed his small force, less than one hundred persons, but carrying arms for five thousand, and issued his proclamation. He had come, he declared, to defend the Protestant religion and the laws and liberties of England. James he denounced as a usurper and he spoke of him not as the King, but as the Duke of York, accusing him, among other acts, of villainy, of having poisoned his brother, the late King Charles, as, also, of having set fire to the city of London. There is no doubt that Monmouth believed that the way to tell lies was to tell big ones. Supported though he was by a small force, he was, nevertheless, backed by a monstrous imagination. Of course he did not neglect to mention that Charles and his own mother (Lucy Walter) had been lawfully married. In the space of four days he had collected about him some three thousand men and he marched them to Taunton, where he was favourably received. It was at Taunton that he proclaimed himself King. He likewise ordered the dissolution of Parliament and set a price upon the head of James II, or the Duke of York, as he called him.

There was no vital spark in the Monmouth rebellion, no human appeal. With all his faults it was felt that it would be ridiculous to exchange the present King for the rebel bastard. Monmouth himself felt the purposelessness of his invasion. He now began to wander about from one place to another and without any apparent object. He had staked all on this throw, and it was abundantly clear that there was nothing for him to gain. His friends in the capital remained inactive, for they had rightly gauged his chances of

success, and no person of quality offered his services to the rebel. The only followers that Monmouth gained were of the poorer sort, men from the remoter parts of the west, where still lurked the traces of the madness of the Popish Plot. From these depths it had not yet vanished, though everywhere else it was forgotten. It was a point upon which Monmouth had not calculated. When the news of Argyle's fate reached him, he realized that the game was up, and when, in the course of his wanderings, he wandered to Sedgemoor, the days of his wandering were over. At Sedgemoor his untrained followers came upon the King's troops and the rout that followed—it has been called a battle, but the word is ill-chosen—settled Monmouth's fate. Escaping from the field, he was caught at Ringwood and wrote a piteous appeal to the King, upon whose head he had but recently put a price. On his arrival in London, on Monmouth's request, but couched in craven language, James consented to see him. He was disgusted with the cowardice that the rebel displayed, for Monmouth's words were now as meek as before they had been bold. It was not twenty months since Monmouth had obtained the pardon of James for his last treachery and had solemnly promised to be the first to draw the sword in defence of his rights. The interview was, of course, without result, and Monmouth now employed his time directing appeals and supplications to all and sundry, the Queen, the Dowager Queen, and those at Court, but when he knew that he was to die he summoned a sort of indifference to his aid, and even stopped betraying his comrades. He was beheaded at Tower Hill, his last words proclaiming his assurance of Heaven.

Of the rebels taken in arms, a small number were given over to military execution by Colonel Kirke, a soldier from Tangier, a man who was to desert from the royal flag a few years later. In the West after Sedgemoor, his work was not more barbarous than were the common severities of the times, not very

much better, in fact, than the executions under Cromwell's rule. The King, however, would have none of it, and ended Kirke's progress by peremptory orders, putting the trial of the rebels into the hands of the Civil Courts. Five judges were sent out to try the criminals, and at their head was Jeffreys, whom Charles II had made his Lord Chief Justice. Thousands were brought up for trial, but most were acquitted. The majority punished received a short sentence of imprisonment or were ordered to be flogged. Of the thousand or so treated as being guilty of rebellion in arms, less than three hundred suffered the death penalty, while the rest were sentenced to ten years transportation to the plantations of the West Indies.

The question of whether these sentences and executions were excessively severe has been in the past answered to James's discredit, though seldom were the figures given. Seen through the eyes of a contemporary, however, the punishments were normal, rather than severe. It was still less than half a century since a rebellion had succeeded in England and killed the King. It was a rebellion that showed no mercy to Royalists, yet, while historians are apt to blame James for the severities that followed the Monmouth affair, they show no such interest when the victims were his father's supporters. It is what I mean by the words "Speaking to a brief against James." The truth is, of course, that James used his power to commute many a sentence, but the opinion of Englishmen was strongly in favour of making a striking example of the rebels, in order to deter others from following their methods. England had known too much violence during the past years. The country was now interested in peace and in the rapid development of its commerce with other nations. Ordinary men were in no mood to tolerate the renewal of civil war on any scale. They had had more than enough of it. They desired peace. They preferred to see attempted rebellion stamped out before it developed into some-

thing worse. They desired greater severity as a guarantee of future security, and indeed the three hundred-odd executions after Sedgemoor were a small number compared with either the vengeance of Elizabeth's government after the risings in the North or the massacres that accompanied Cromwell's progress through Ireland.

The legend of the infamous Jeffreys arose after James had been deposed. It is again Whig history, and men of the time would have been much surprised to hear that the Rebellion had been crushed with excessive violence and tyrannical force. When James had been deposed it was necessary to make as strong a case as possible against him, and, therefore, in favour of his successors.

With the suppression of the rebellion, James seemed firmly seated on the English throne and he now proposed to pass on to what was the chief object of his life, the establishment of Toleration in England. Toleration was an old belief of the Stuarts, and one which Charles had returned to time and again. He had always been defeated, however, in his efforts to secure it, or anything approaching it. He had met opposition on one of those points which it was wiser to concede. He never risked the Crown for a disinterested policy. James, however, did not know how to yield when he was opposed, nor what sort of opposition it was better to bow to. He went forward vigorously for Toleration, and it ruined him.

Against the whole spirit of toleration there stood the Test Act. To cope with the Monmouth rebellion, a regular force of about fourteen thousand men had been raised, subject to the approval of Parliament. James proposed to keep this force in being, to establish a regular standing army, as he had already established a regular navy. Among the officers of this new army, however, that had been hastily raised to meet a national peril, were many Catholics, who by law were not even allowed to hold commissions. James determined to retain their services and to make the fact

the opportunity, or excuse, for putting forth his larger schemes for general toleration. The big magnates saw in the event the excuse, or opportunity, for renewing the century-old battle for the seizing of control. James put forward his toleration, and the nobles returned to their charge. It was the first excuse that James had given his enemies to renew the campaign against monarchy, and they seized it with avidity. With the rumour of toleration, anti-Catholic feeling began to be inflamed once more. Nor was the flame diminished when about 40,000 Huguenots emigrated to England, following the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes.[1]

In November James met his Parliament and it was plain that the old elements of hostility had blazed up again in the old manner. In the speech from the throne the King said that he had deemed it necessary for the safety of the nation and for the stability of the government to augment the regular army and he now requested them to supply the means of defraying the extra expense and also to sanction the employment of Catholic officers. He proposed, that is, toleration. He was opposed more bitterly than he had expected to be. The Commons and the Peers, but especially the Bishops, led by Compton, were determined in their refusal to continue the Catholic commissions, and equally at one in their decision to maintain the standing disabilities of all Catholics.

Finding so small a measure of toleration among his Parliamentarians, James prorogued the Parliament and determined to make use of the "Dispensing Power" in favour of his policy. This Dispensing Power was the customary right of the King to dispense special cases from the normal course of the law. It was an old, national custom, founded on the assumption that the laws were the King's laws and therefore the dispensing with its observance in par-

[1] The Edict of Nantes was a patched-up peace that everyone knew could not last, but the Revocation at this particular time was especially unfortunate for James.

ticular cases the King's right. It was a custom taken for granted up till then—but these were post-Restoration days. At any rate, there was nothing unconstitutional in the King thus using his special power. Nevertheless, James was at pains to have his right to use this privilege established in the Courts of Law before he brought it into play, but once the right had been thus established, he tended to employ the Dispensing Power more and more.

James's interests were everywhere, and if he was the centre of a system, he saw to it that the system revolved round that centre. He kept his eyes on the Admiralty and on the Army, while he was busily engaged in building up a reserve in the Treasury—the first that the Stuart kings had known. He gave his skilled attention to everything of importance. But it was his religious interest and activity that interested his opponents and it was by these that he was to be judged. Though the ancient form of worship was still proscribed by law, Catholics had been permitted during the last three years to practise in private houses. But James thought it was right to give protection to the *public* exercise of the religion that was his own. He opened several chapels in London, and even allowed the Jesuits to start a school. Moreover, he held that it was part of his sovereign duty to avail himself of the advice of his subjects, whatever their private religious convictions, and he named a priestly friend of his own and whom he held in particular respect, a privy councillor. It was Edward Petre whom he thus appointed, a priest of the Society of Jesus. At the end of 1686, by the influence of Petre and for the satisfaction of Sunderland, who was in the meantime darkly hinting at his own conversion to Catholicism, he dismissed Rochester and put Sunderland in his place at the head of the government.

Sunderland and Rochester were both of the new Aristocracy. Since the beginning of the reign they had fought for supremacy in the Council. When

Rochester fell, Sunderland became the leader, and he was, perhaps, the worst man James could have employed to head his Council. As has been indicated, James had no judgment of men and the fact of Sunderland's leaning (apparently) towards the Catholic religion had great weight with him. Sunderland was his evil genius. He gave him bad advice with consistent judgment, and led him to his ruin step by step. It was upon his suggestion that James first thought of putting Petre into the Council—to the dismay of the Catholic world, it may be said, and especially of the Papacy. From the Vatican, James was advised to direct Catholic affairs with the greatest circumspection, to make the smallest moves and with the utmost care. If it was his purpose to serve the Catholic faith, he was told that he would do well to delay. Sunderland, on the other hand, rushed him rashly from one extreme to the next. The most risky and unwise measures had Sunderland's support, when they were not his original suggestions. The Earl had seen that Petre should be pushed into the Council Chamber in order to shield himself in the case of blame. Any public anger could easily to put upon the priest, once it was aroused. Furthermore, Sunderland was secretly in touch with James's enemies in Holland, betraying James to William of Orange, while he was advising the King thus wildly at home.

The time had come for concessions. The idea of toleration had been put forward in the teeth of the opposition, and it was now necessary for James to strain every nerve to reconcile his enemies. He should have used all his power to pacify his formidable opponents. He should have met them with some half measures. He did the opposite. Instead of seeking a truce, he carried the fight forward with renewed vigour. In early April, 1687, he put forth his famous Proclamation by which the law was to consider all persons equal, irrespective of the creed of each. It was a real and full policy of toleration, the final effort in that direction to be made by the Stuarts.

It was known as the " Declaration of Indulgence," and it provided that all offices of state should be thrown open equally to Dissenter or Catholic. It proposed, likewise, to abolish the old laws for persecution of opinions. Dissenters hastened to express their gratitude, Catholics were delighted, but the rest of the country looked on blackly.

The root of the difficulty was that England did not understand the principle of toleration. It was as if the people had said, " Well, if we are not to persecute Catholics nor yet Dissenters, who *may* we persecute ? " James, for what reason you like, was really, in this matter, in advance of his age, and no one now denies (whatever they did during the last century) that he was absolutely right in his fight for toleration. The wild belief that a plot was afoot to compel the country to revert to the old faith gained much support. The impossibility of the thing—Catholics were outnumbered in England by seven or eight to one—only made the bewildering business the more exasperating. Toleration was represented as some new and subtle form of tyranny, of which James was the originator and the director.

The Royal Proclamation was, of course, but a provisional order until confirmed by Parliament. The King caused an enquiry to be made with the object of ascertaining what support he was likely to receive in the Commons. He was genuinely surprised to discover, not only that he would be opposed by about two-thirds of the members, but that there were not wanting those among the great Squires who would use the occasion to raise a new " No Popery " frenzy among the masses. For the moment toleration halted in mid-air. The gentry would not pass it as law, and until it had been thus passed, it remained but a provisional order, or even a preliminary notice.

When James paused, shocked and bewildered by the refusal of the Commons to perform that which appeared to him but an elementary piece of justice to his lately wronged subjects, the big lords had already

begun that intrigue that was to alter the course of English history. The territorial Aristocracy was by now commencing those secret, but very effective negotiations with Holland that were to bring in William of Orange; to replace James on the throne with his own son-in-law. This possibility never occurred to James. He did not know, I repeat, how to read the minds of men. Secret dealings of any kind were quite foreign to his nature and, he imagined, foreign consequently to theirs. For another thing, he could never believe that his own son-in-law and nephew, but above all, his own daughter, could conspire to deprive him of his crown. Unlike his more astute contemporaries and a number of his more recent predecessors, he employed no secret agents, and was, therefore, deprived of the inner knowledge of his own kingdom.

One thing about James we may notice with curiosity here, for it makes him, if anything, more human than he sometimes seems. He had never quite rid himself of the "mistress" habit. Ever since his conversion he had been waging a bitter war on this particular personal vice, and not always gaining the victory. There were falls from grace, followed by repentance and good resolutions. But a fall now meant something more than it had meant before he joined the Catholics. A fall (or a mistress) meant the guilt of mortal sin and until that was absolved sacramentally, he was deprived of the right to Communicate. It therefore happened now and again that the Church that James was endeavouring to serve and the faith for which he was hazarding everything, directly forbade him access to its Sacraments. While he was putting his Crown in peril for the Church and the Seven Sacraments, he was not personally allowed to approach the altar. It was a strange position, but it should be added here that James did eventually overcome his private weakness for women before the end.

The intrigue with William of Orange, it has been said, was begun, and yet it might have been put off

indefinitely or, perhaps, brought to nothing, but for an event, or accident, that finally tilted the balance against King James. The reason that might have induced the intriguers to stay their hand was the fact that James was elderly and without a son. He was already ageing, and had passed the year at which his brother had died. As things stood, the succession of the Crown was Protestant. His elder daughter, Mary, was next in succession and she had been brought up a Protestant, and married to a Protestant prince. She was childless, and those who knew William best, knew why, but her sister, Anne, was also married to a Protestant, Prince George of Denmark, and she was not childless. The future, then, and even the near future, seemed safe for Protestantism. James had no son, he was elderly, and it was generally believed that his wife was not able to bear children. There was a reasonable excuse for waiting. And just when there seemed no pressing need for the Aristocracy at present to make a move there was suddenly spread a rumour that the Queen was with child.

This startling news, that was so speedily confirmed, altered the entire situation. Should the child of the Queen be a boy, then the succession of Mary, James's first daughter, was indefinitely postponed, if not arrested altogether. The intrigue with William of Orange was speeded-up and now carried forward in a much more business-like manner. When the Dutch Ambassador, for instance, returned to Holland he carried letters to the Prince from Shrewsbury, Halifax, Bedford, Devonshire, Clarendon, Derby, Nottingham, Lumley, Churchill, Rochester, Sunderland, and, of course, Compton, Bishop of London, to mention no others. The letters, in fact, were from the Aristocracy of England.

The plotting was naturally below the surface, but on the surface was started a campaign of good, honest lying that fairly bewildered the luckless James. Mary of Modena's pregnancy was denied and derided in

print, and the suggestion that the whole thing was but a plot (Popish, obviously) was rapidly spread over the Kingdom. In a word, the atmosphere was dark with dishonesty, deceits and treacheries. It was an unpleasant period in English history, and one over which it is not gratifying to linger.

The King, of course, looked forward eagerly to an heir, and in his simplicity, perhaps, fancying that an heir would be welcome to his subjects, took the opportunity to republish his order of toleration. He should, instead, have been pondering over the story of the Stuart family one hundred and twenty years before his reign. For the change that an heir was to make in James's situation was very much the same kind of change that came to Mary Queen of Scots when her son was born at Holyrood, as was noted in its place. A century and more had elapsed and the same thing was happening again, but what a succession of violent adventures the romantic Stuarts had known during the period ! They were to know still more. What a far cry it seemed to the days of Bothwell and Darnley. How life had changed from first to last, and yet here again with different forms and in different fashions, the central fact occurred again. James's child was born 10th June, 1688, and it was a son.

James reissued his Edict in April, 1688, showing the people how a united England might be formed by allowing religious liberty to all. Early in May the Bishops received an order from the King and the Council, that the proclamation of toleration should be read from the pulpit of every church in London in two Sundays' time, and in every country church on the Sunday following. James wished his words to be heard by all and the pulpits in those days were the natural means of appealing to the masses. But the Church of England was, as a body, opposed to the freedom of Catholics. They elected to look upon the order as a direct challenge to themselves.

Advantage was taken of the occasion to raise a fresh plot against James. The controller of the plot was

Compton, Bishop of London, already, as we have noted, in touch with Holland. Under his guidance perfect silence was preserved as to the bishops' attitude regarding the reading of the proclamation from the pulpits. As the days went by, not a word reached the King that his order would not be obeyed, and this silence he took for general consent. He was deceived, for a number of bishops had been called together by Compton and had drawn up a secret resolution against obedience. A Memorial was drawn up by seven of them,[1] excusing themselves from compliance with the royal wish, on the ground that the Dispensing Power was illegal. It was not a true ground, since this power was declared legal by the lawyers. The aged Sancroft —Archbishop of Canterbury—was induced to become one of the secret seven, but the active agent all the time was Compton. Late on the Friday night before the Sunday on which the proclamation was to be read, the bishops presented their Memorial to the King. He was, of course, staggered, as he had concluded that there would be no hitch in the arrangements. Compton had calculated that there would be no time for the King to consider the situation, that this last minute Memorial would put him in a dilemma. It did, but James had the wisdom to defer his reply. He appointed the next day, Saturday, for his answer, and bade the bishops meet him. But Compton had prepared a further mine. Large numbers of the Memorial had been printed and before the time arranged for the Bishops to meet the King, the document (that the King had only just received) was distributed throughout London. It was in the hands of the clergy and laity before the King had given his answer, and it was published on the day before the Sunday that was to have heard the proclamation read from the London pulpits. The fateful Sunday arrived, and the Proclamation was read in very few of the churches.

[1] Other bishops were invited, but declined.

The Council was now divided as to how to meet the situation thus created. Should they take up the challenge of the seven, or could they ignore it? Sancroft was for seeking an accommodation, but Compton wished to be a martyr, and Compton, as usual, won over the aged Head of the English Church. Before their trial the Bishops refused to be left at liberty. They would give no recognizances, and so they must be imprisoned. They were placed in the Tower, but allowed great freedom therein, what time the crowd was made to understand that they were consigned to the dungeons. Compton's ruse had succeeded, and the bishops had become the heroes of the hour. It was believed that they were making a stand for freedom against the aggression of the Vatican while all that James wanted was that Catholics and Dissenters should be tolerated as citizens in England.

Anti-Catholic feeling, never difficult to rouse in London, was well stirred up by the Trial of the Seven Bishops. The publication of the protest, that they had organized behind James's back, put the King in a particularly awkward position. Either he must accept a full defeat on the one point that really mattered to him and put the Crown definitely in an inferior position, or he must bring the conspirators to trial. But from a trial James had nothing to gain. The mob that demonstrated outside the Tower showed how little the country was prepared for the spirit of toleration. If the Bishops were acquitted, the mob rejoiced at the defeat of toleration, and if they were condemned, the anger against toleration killed the thing itself. It was on the last day of June that the trial came to an end. The Judges were divided on their verdict, but the jury declared for acquittal. The plot was thus wholly successful, and much rejoicing followed the verdict.

Meanwhile the agreement between William of Orange and the Aristocrats was nearing completion. William had sent his representative to congratulate James on the birth of his son, and the same individual

—it was Zuyleistein—passed on from James to visit the greater magnates, whose desire it was to supplant the King. A letter was written inviting William to come over to England. He was to come as the Protestant hero, since James was the foe of Protestantism and the framer of the toleration policy. William was told that great numbers would join the invaders but also to bring a great force with him in case James should win the day. This might seem a contradiction, but the fact was that the gentry knew that Englishmen in general were torn between a love of the Monarchy and a hatred of Catholics, and it was not known upon which side they would range themselves when the final issue was forced. But they were able to speak with fuller authority when they stated that the gentry would desert their King when the right moment arrived.

For his own part, William's great care was to avoid such continental complications as should prevent him from being able to bring his foreign army over to England. It was also necessary for him to induce the Dutch government (of which he was not the master, but rather the chairman or principal speaker) to lend him men, money and ships for the enterprise. The story of how both these objects were accomplished and of how, further, the English people were made to pay back the Dutch loan and the interest, do not concern these pages. But before any real move was made, yet a further attempt was made to discredit James, when a forged document was used to disprove the legitimacy of the little Prince of Wales. William of Orange caused no less than 80,000 copies of this forgery to be printed. Soon afterwards he published the statement that he had no intention whatsoever of dethroning his father-in-law. This statement was followed by one to the effect that, on reaching England, he would do all he could for the freedom of Catholics. Following the last remark, he felt himself really ready to start out against James. It was on the 19th of October that he sailed.

The great Dutch fleet was sent back by a gale and held windbound for a fortnight. On 1st November the wind changed and they set out once more. After a zig-zag voyage lasting until the 5th November, they anchored at Torbay, and William and his 16,000 men were landed and moved inland. The English people who watched this strange host arrive on English soil, an army composed of men of many nations, but with six British regiments in Dutch pay amongst them, were justly alarmed. The pamphlet of the Prince of Wales's illegitimacy was distributed, and they were told that the foreign mercenaries had arrived for "Liberty and Religion." The people listened, but they held themselves aloof, not caring to join in the alien adventure. It was one thing to dislike Catholics; quite another to support this host of various nationalities, led by the small Dutch Prince. So little did William expect a reception such as this that he was quite put out of countenance. He even thought of abandoning the whole business, but he was saved from this extremity by treason in James's camp.

The King had as large an army as had William, but it was officered by the gentry, by those indeed whose main purpose it was to destroy the remains of Monarchy in England. Chief man in that army was the Lieutenant-General, Churchill. He had just sworn especial loyalty to James. Three regiments the commander sent out to Salisbury, as though to oppose William, but the commanding officer of each was in a plot to desert James the King. In the night they deserted according to plan, but most of the men they led refused to follow them. Churchill's next move was to try to induce James to take up a position in the front, that would put him into William's power, but when he found that the King was not so to be misled, he simply deserted himself, and walked over to the enemy. Even William was astonished and disgusted at the baseness of this conduct, convenient though it was to him.

Churchill's coat-turning was a signal for the general desertion. The leaders began to melt away from James's army and in a night, almost, the formation of that army was broken. It is a very interesting fact and one we have noted before: the people did not desert the monarchy. When the officers went, the men remained behind, and a leaderless army James now had, as he fell back upon London. The succession of desertions went on. Almost hourly came the news of fresh gaps in the commissioned ranks. James had taken with him, when he set out to meet William, George, Prince of Denmark, his daughter Anne's husband, and as each new name was sent in as having gone over to the enemy, the Prince commented, "*Est-il possible?*" On the night of the 21st November, Prince George followed the general tramp to the Dutch camp, after his father-in-law had retired to rest. When they brought him the news, the King merely repeated, "*Est-il possible?*" But when he learned that his daughter, Anne, had taken the same direction, he was cut to the heart. She left London in a coach and six and with her went Sarah, the wife of Churchill, and Compton, the Bishop of London.

James returned to the capital. All those whom he had trusted (in his simplicity) had abandoned him for the invader. Each now hoped that there was a prospect before him, but for James there was now no hope. The King was doomed.

. . . . . .

James lay at Whitehall. The writs that had been drawn up in haste for the summoning of a new Parliament had not all been dispatched. Some few remained and he burned them, watching while they turned to ashes. He lay down for a few hours, but at midnight he rose and dressed. It was twenty-four hours since he had sent away his wife and their little son. He now proposed to follow the same route that he had caused Mary of Modena to take through the cold December night. Leaving the Palace

secretly, with one follower, Hales, whose faith had caused James to protect him, they passed through the gardens of Whitehall and came upon the river. Rapidly they were driven to the stone steps by the gravelly slope, where they might find the ferry for the Lambeth shore. In the darkness and the wind, were they rowed across and the water knew one other sound than the swish of oars, as, with symbolic gesture, James rid himself of a large metal object. It was the great seal of England that he tossed thus into the black waters.

The King and his follower were landed and found that horses had been prepared for them. Through the long hours before dawn they rode, and as the languid winter daylight reluctantly appeared, they were well into the county of Kent ; a county at that season dull and heavy with rain. Daylight was truly come before they reached their place of embarkation. . . . That same day Mary of Modena and her tiny son were landed safely on French soil, at Calais.

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A regular tramp of many feet was to be heard on a raw and foggy December night in the western part of London, as armed men marched up Piccadilly from the west side. Few were the lights, but those that shone fell upon blue uniforms of the Dutch, and the colours that went before the army. The steady sound of drums was to be heard along the still western road. A detachment of Hollanders was sent down the hill to hold the Palace of St. James's. Dutch words of command rang out and the main body continued its march towards Whitehall. In front of the Palace the columns fell into line, standing on the ground that had once held the scaffold of King Charles I. . . . But his son, James, the last English King, passed over the water.

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One last scene, and we have done.

It was nearly twelve years later, 1701, and James was in his sixty-eighth year. The exile King was at

St. Germain's. Much had happened during the interval, but leaving him seemingly the same at the end, as he had been in 1688, when William of Orange was made King of England. Much had happened, but the situation was unchanged. The fine siege of Derry and the rearguard action to be known, somewhat fantastically, to the future, as the Battle of the Boyne, had passed into history. King William III, who had supplanted James in England, had grown strangely unpopular since his coming, and James, in absence, had recovered that popularity that he lost while he was King. The pendulum was again swinging and now the luck should have swung round to the Stuarts once more. But the unpopular King remained in England, while the popular King remained in exile, for it was the Aristocracy that mattered, and that was now firmly established. The people were left longing for James, and the poets sang of the King over the water. That strange thing was happening in England, which we may term the "Rise of the Jacobites." It was enshrined in literature and music, and the songs of the movement still ring in our ears. It left its mark on English literature, though the mark has generally been missed, since it was the expression of the country's attachment to the old Monarchy, and its dislike of the oligarchy that had replaced it. It created a tradition that lingered for more than a century. Well might the songs be sung by thoughtful Englishmen, though more quietly than Englishmen are wont to sing, for the songs centred about the last King of England, and the reasons why he became the last King might well make an Englishman thoughtful. But the Dutch King remained on the English throne, and gradually he was recognized by Europe: king *de facto*, but not *de jure*. And the Treaty of Ryswick was signed, and William lived on, an old, withered man, near death. But in exile King James also lived, and he sometimes thought, "If I could have relied upon all my troops I might not have been put to this extremity."

At the beginning of September, 1701, James was ill. He fell faint at Mass in his chapel at St. Germain's, and the Queen, in whom he had found a new peace in his exile and just that which his life had hitherto lacked, helped him to his room. He was put to bed but in a day they knew that he was dying; nor was he deceived. He made his last confession, and his grief was for the immoral life he had led and not for the three kingdoms he had lost. They sent for his son, the Prince of Wales, though Wales was never to know the lad, and he blessed him and bade him keep his Faith against all things and against all men, advice that he had acted on very faithfully himself.

For it was this Faith that mattered to him now and not the Crowns and Kingdoms. The long, strange life was at last at an end. The second exile was concluded. Gone were the ghosts of courtiers and ministers, traitors and conspirators, all; forgotten as they were forgiven. The priest had entered the chamber of death and all James's thought was for the Sacrament, the last link with life. He was asked, "Do you believe Jesus Christ to be really present in this host?" and he replied, simply, "With all my heart, I believe it."

Without pain, but with a smile on his lips, the King passed. . . .

END

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